4404 k.9

A

TREATISE

UPON

THE WALK OF FAITH.

By W. ROMAINE, M. A.

Rector of St. Andrew Wardrobe and St. Ann Blackfriars
and Lecturer of St. Dunstan's in the West.

Walk humbly with THY God. Micah vi. 8.

THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. SCATCHERD, AVE-MARIA-LANE;
V. GRIFFITHS, PATER-NOSTER ROW; T. N.
LONGMAN; H. D. SYMONDS; W. SYMONDS;
J. WALLIS; W. TREPPASS; LACKING-
TON AND CO. HIGHAM;
J. MATTHEWS.

1798.


BRITISH MUSEUM

THE PREFACE.

EVER since the Life of Faith *was published, I have been attending to the doctrines therein advanced, and bringing them into experience. Their truth has appeared to me from the word of God, and has been confirmed by their being accompanied with the power of God. His divine influence attends his own doctrines to this day, and they have the promised effect upon the heart and life of the believer. They are mighty through God for all the purposes of salvation. What is said upon the subject in these volumes is chiefly in this experimental way. My design is to bring the great and leading points of our religion into use and practice, and to shew how necessary the doctrines of grace are for the well governing of the Christian walk. Every thing needful is promised, and by faith is received, which can make it even and regular, holy and happy.*

The apostle Paul complained of professors, who walked not according to the gospel. There has been occasion for the same complaint ever since; but never more than the present. Many walk at this day, who make some profession of Christ, and yet never attain to any stedfastness, but are tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, and at last come to nothing.

Others pretending to be better ſettled attain to ſome form of godlineſs, but are without the life and power of it; they appear to have ſome notions and opinions about the way of righteouſneſs, but not being taught them of God, nor ever brought under the mighty influence of them, their walk is therefore very uneven and irregular, and generally in the end brings great ſcandal upon the name and cauſe of Chriſt.

We have alſo many at this day, who ſet out in the ways of religion, but never felt the ruin of the fall, nor the plague of their own hearts: theſe are commonly very confident and preſumptuous; they make a ſhining profeſſion, and go on with great parade, until they come to be tried, and then in the time of temptation they fall away.

There are others who are the real children of God, and yet do not walk as becometh their high rank and dignity. An even, holy, happy walk with their reconciled God and Father is their privilege, and there is grace ſufficient promiſed in Jeſus, and to be received by his Spirit, to enable them to live up to it, that they may walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleaſing. Yea, the apoſtles call upon them and encourage them to be going on and advancing in the right way—"Furthermore then we beſeech you and exhort you, brethren, by the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that as ye have received of us, how ye ought to walk and to pleaſe God, ſo ye would abound more and more." 1 Theſſ. iv. 1. *How few follow this evangelical exhortation? How very few attain and preſerve in their conſciences the ſenſe of God's being perfectly at peace with them? It ought to rule there always and by all means: but for want of it, they afford continual occaſion for a legal and unbeliving ſpirit to rob them of their peace, and thereby to diſtreſs them in their hearts. As guilt comes in, love goes out. What weakens the cauſe muſt alſo weaken the effect. Love, with its fruits, muſt decreaſe in pro-*

portion as the believer withdraws his heart-dependance from God. Then he begins to walk uneven and uncomfortable, he grows cold and indifferent about ſpiritual things, he gets into darkneſs and diſcontent, he becomes quite unhappy in his frame, and unthankful in his affections: whatever was the cauſe of his falling into this decay, it began at the root. His faith was attacked, and gave way. As this yielded, the decay became general, and it was found true, "If ye will walk contrary unto me, ſaith God, "then will I alſo walk contrary unto you."

Reader, if thou haſt the faith of God's elect, thou knoweſt that theſe things are true. Thou findeſt it hard work to maintain peace with God: and if this be not maintained, if the foundation give way, the building will certainly totter. Look well then to the groundwork. Is all ſafe there? Doſt thou ſee the infinite glory of the Saviour's work, when he made peace by the blood of the croſs, and does this ſilence guilt in thy conſcience? Canſt thou at all times draw nigh in love to a reconciled God? Does not the ſenſe of thy failings and remaining corruptions keep thee at a diſtance from him, and render thy walk uncomfortable? eſpecially when without are fightings, within are fears. If it be very difficult under ſuch trials to preſerve a ſenſe of God's loving kindneſs, yet it ſhould be remembered, there is a gracious proviſion made for the eſtabliſhing of the ſoul ſo ſafely in Jeſus Chriſt, that the peace of God may rule in it always, and by all means. Is it not neceſſary then to enquire what this proviſion is? how it may be received? and how it may be made uſe of? For if by daily practice it may be experienced in its divine power, it will then have the ſame happy effect, which it had upon David; *"I will run the way of thy com-*
"mandments, when thou haſt ſet my heart at liberty."
May thine heart, reader, and mine, enjoy more of the liberty of the children of God, and then we ſhall not

only go forward, but alſo run faſt, and may nothing ſtop us from preſſing toward the mark, till we win the prize of the high calling of Jeſus Chriſt in God.

This has been my conſtant prayer during the writing of the following treatiſe. It was the fruit of reading, and meditating, and praying over thoſe ſcriptures, which ſpeak of the walk of faith. Such reflections, as uſed to occur to myſelf, I have put down; whether it was in ſearching mine own heart, or in begging the bleſſing of God upon the text then under conſideration. This ſeemed to me an eaſy method and very uſeful: becauſe the doctrine would lead to practice, and frequent and heart-ſearching meditations would tend, under the teaching of the Holy Ghoſt, to an increaſe of faith. There are ſome ſoliloquies, addreſsed to my own ſoul, and ſome exerciſes of devotion, in prayer and thankſgiving. I would have every believer to conſider, whether it be not his privilege to join me in them, and to make my words his own. If he cannot follow me in his experience after the 5th chapter; I pray God to increaſe his faith, that this book and his experience may go hand in hand; and that he may attain to holy fellowſhip with God in all duties, and to rejoice in God at all times, yea, under the croſs itſelf and to go on conquering and to conquer, till the good fight of Faith be over, and he finiſh his courſe with joy.

BRITISH
21 JY 82
MUSEUM

CONTENTS.

CHAP. I.

WHOEVER walks with God must be first acquainted with the way of peace - p. 7

CHAP. II.

The believer is reconciled to God, and has the peace of God ruling in his conscience, and they two walk together; because they are now agreed - - 20

CHAP. III.

The believer in his heart cleaves to God, and walks with him in love - 41

CHAP. IV.

The believer goes on successfully, while he walks by faith in a constant dependence upon his reconciled God and loving Father 71

CHAP. V.

The believer orders his steps according to the word, walking with a free heart in the King's highway of obedience - 107

CHAP. VI.

The walk of the believer in the way of duty, 127

CHAP. VII.

The believer goes on his way rejoicing in God, 193.

CHAP. VIII.

The believer walks humbly with God, bearing his crofs - - - - 226

CHAP. IX.

The believer, exercifed with the outward crofs, carries it with patience, and finds it a great help to him in his walk heavenwards, 231

CHAP. X.

The believer, exercifed with the inward crofs, learns to walk humbly with his God 306

CHAP. XI.

The believer fights the good fight of faith, and goes forth conquering, and to conquer 339

CHAP. XII.

The believer marches on, fighting the good fight of faith, and daily gains victory over the world - - - 357

CHAP. XIII.

The believer marches on, refifting and overcoming the wiles and the affaults of the tempter - - - - 369

CHAP. XIV.

The believer, kept by the power of God, perfeveres in his holy walk and victorious warfare - - - - 378

CHAP. XV.

The believer finifhes his courfe, and enters into reft - - - 398

21 JY 82

TREATISE, &c.

CHAP. I.

Whoever walks with God, muſt be firſt acquainted with the way of peace.

IT is the conſtant uſage of ſcripture to repreſent ſpiritual things by material, and to ſpeak of the faculties and actions of the ſoul by terms borrowed from thoſe of the body. Walking is a bodily action, and conſiſts in moving and going from one place to another: hence it is applied to the ſpiritual walk. The ſoul reconciled to God, and at peace with him, has an appointed way in which it is to walk, in order to enjoy the grace promiſed to them who are in Chriſt Jeſus. This is enjoyed by faith; and therefore the ſcripture calls the believer's going on in his walk with God from ſtrength to ſtrength, *The walk of faith.* "We walk by faith," ſays the apoſtle, "not by ſight."

When man fell from God he loſt his way, and had neither will nor power to return. The Old Teſtament church makes this confeſſion--"All we, like ſheep, have gone aſtray, we have turned EVERY ONE to his own way." *Iſa.* liii. 6.

The apoſtle Peter reminds believers of this ---"Ye were as ſheep going aſtray, but are now returned to the Shepherd and Biſhop of your ſouls." 1 *Pet.* ii. 25. To which agree the words of his brother Paul---"There is none righteous, no not one; there is none that underſtandeth, there is none that ſeeketh after God, they are ALL gone out of the way." *Rom.* iii. 10, 11, 12. The whole human race, ſay the oracles of truth, is gone aſtray, ALL of them are gone out of the way; they have left the way of God, and turned every one to his own way; they are unable, like a poor loſt ſheep, the moſt unable of all creatures, to return, yea, they are unwilling alſo; for they walk not after the ſpirit, but after the fleſh---carnally-minded, and in their carnal mind enmity itſelf againſt God and his ways.

It pleaſed God in the exceeding riches of his grace to reveal to thoſe wanderers the way of ſalvation. He made it known to them upon the fall; and believers, from that time forward, ſaw it plainly, and went on in it comfortably. Enoch, Noah, Abraham, &c. are ſaid to have walked with God, in the very ſame way afterwards marked out by the written word; which was a directory to the Jews, ſhewing them how they ſhould walk in the ſteps of the faith of their father Abraham. Age after age, God raiſed up the prophets to bring his people into the King's highway, and to put them upon praying, that they might be kept in it. By the mouth of his ſervant David, he

gave them this promiſe—"Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will he teach ſinners in the way: the meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way." Encouraged by this warrant from the word of God, ſinners, feeling their wants, were led to pray—"Shew me thy ways, O Lord! teach me thy paths, lead me in thy truth, and teach me." *Pſalm* xxv. 4. It is written in the prophets—"They ſhall all be taught of God---They ſhall all be taught of me, from the leaſt of them, unto the greateſt of them," ſaith the Lord. If any of his children lack wiſdom, and aſk it of God, he giveth to all his liberally, and upbraideth not. He brings them by his word, and by his Holy Spirit, to the knowledge of themſelves, and to the knowledge of the true God.

Divine teaching is neceſſary to make men acquainted with themſelves. They know not their ſtate, nor fear their danger, until the Holy Spirit, according to his office, proceed from the Father and the Son: then he convinces them of ſin, of the exceeding ſinfulneſs of it, of the guilt thereby incurred, and of the wrath deſerved. He enlightens the underſtanding with a clear ſight of thoſe truths, and he faſtens the conviction of them upon the conſcience. Then they find that they had been blind and ignorant, rebels in their wills, and apoſtates in their hearts from God. He makes them feel the corruption of their nature, and the error of their ways, in which, if they

The apoſtle Peter reminds believers of this ---"Ye were as ſheep going aſtray, but are now returned to the Shepherd and Biſhop of your ſouls." 1 *Pet.* ii. 25. To which agree the words of his brother Paul---"There is none righteous, no not one; there is none that underſtandeth, there is none that ſeeketh after God, they are ALL gone out of the way." *Rom.* iii. 10, 11, 12. The whole human race, ſay the oracles of truth, is gone aſtray, ALL of them are gone out of the way; they have left the way of God, and turned every one to his own way; they are unable, like a poor loſt ſheep, the moſt unable of all creatures, to return, yea, they are unwilling alſo; for they walk not after the ſpirit, but after the fleſh---carnally-minded, and in their carnal mind enmity itſelf againſt God and his ways.

It pleaſed God in the exceeding riches of his grace to reveal to thoſe wanderers the way of ſalvation. He made it known to them upon the fall; and believers, from that time forward, ſaw it plainly, and went on in it comfortably. Enoch, Noah, Abraham, &c. are ſaid to have walked with God, in the very ſame way afterwards marked out by the written word; which was a directory to the Jews, ſhewing them how they ſhould walk in the ſteps of the faith of their father Abraham. Age after age, God raiſed up the prophets to bring his people into the King's highway, and to put them upon praying, that they might be kept in it. By the mouth of his ſervant David, he

gave them this promiſe—"Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will he teach ſinners in the way: the meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way." Encouraged by this warrant from the word of God, ſinners, feeling their wants, were led to pray—"Shew me thy ways, O Lord! teach me thy paths, lead me in thy truth, and teach me." *Pſalm* xxv. 4. It is written in the prophets—"They ſhall all be taught of God---They ſhall all be taught of me, from the leaſt of them, unto the greateſt of them," ſaith the Lord. If any of his children lack wiſdom, and aſk it of God, he giveth to all his liberally, and upbraideth not. He brings them by his word, and by his Holy Spirit, to the knowledge of themſelves, and to the knowledge of the true God.

Divine teaching is neceſſary to make men acquainted with themſelves. They know not their ſtate, nor fear their danger, until the Holy Spirit, according to his office, proceed from the Father and the Son: then he convinces them of ſin, of the exceeding ſinfulneſs of it, of the guilt thereby incurred, and of the wrath deſerved. He enlightens the underſtanding with a clear ſight of thoſe truths, and he faſtens the conviction of them upon the conſcience. Then they find that they had been blind and ignorant, rebels in their wills, and apoſtates in their hearts from God. He makes them feel the corruption of their nature, and the error of their ways, in which, if they

had gone on, they must inevitably have perished: for they were without will, and without power, to return to God. When they were made to see it right, that they ought to return, and to repent, yet it was not their choice to come to him in the way of believing. They found they could not believe, unless it was given them from above. Faith is the gift of God. And cannot be received, but by the mighty operation of God. He must put forth his divine power, or else the convinced sinner will remain utterly helpless and hopeless, shut up in unbelief.

Thus the Lord teaches all his children. He makes them acquainted with their fallen state, and sensible of their guilt and of their misery. He brings them to the right knowledge of the corruption of every faculty of soul and body, which are always inclined to evil, and incapable of doing any thing truly good. A corrupt tree can bring forth nothing but evil fruit. The judgment is enlightened to see this, the conscience is awakened to feel this, and thereby the convinced sinner is made willing to be taught the way of salvation. The Holy Spirit fulfils his office, by teaching him the knowledge of God.

Our blessed Saviour declares, no man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him; and this he does by the Holy Spirit of wisdom and revelation, who is therefore given to the chil-

dren of God, that they may know him and believe in him, as their reconciled Father in Chriſt Jeſus. This ſaving knowledge is hid from the worldly wiſe and prudent, but is revealed unto the unlearned, whom the Holy Spirit has made ſimple and teachable people. To them he reveals the things of God. He makes them acquainted with the

Nature of the Godhead, which is one. There is one Jehovah, and there is none other. And alſo with the

Perſonality in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Spirit. Theſe three exiſt in the one Jehovah. They took thoſe names, not to deſcribe their manner of exiſting, but their manner of acting; not what they are in themſelves, but how they ſtand related to us in the œconomy of redemption: for the Eternal Three entered into covenant before all worlds, and agreed to ſuſtain certain covenant offices, and aſſume names, or characters, deſcriptive of their offices. Father is the title of that divine perſon, who, out of his infinite grace, gave an innumerable company of ſinners to his Son, upon condition that he would be manifeſted in the fleſh, and would become their ſurety, to work out for them a righteouſneſs in his life, and to make an atonement for them by his death, and then he would be his Father and their Father. A co-equal and co-eternal Perſon accepted the condition, and covenanted to be made man, and to live and die for the many ſons, whom he was to bring to glory; there-

fore he took the name of Son, Son of God, Son of Man, &c. Another co-equal and co-eternal Perſon covenanted to breathe life into them, to be to them the Spirit or breath of life, that they might be regenerate from a death in treſpaſſes and ſins, and be made the children of God, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Chriſt, therefore he is called throughout the ſcriptures, *the Spirit*, or the breath of life. He makes them acquainted with the covenant, as he has promiſed. "The ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will ſhew them his covenant." *Pſalm* xxv. 14. He will open to them the nature and certainty of all covenant engagements for the eſtabliſhment and growth of their faith. *The covenant was ordered in all things and ſure:* it was ORDERED by the counſel and purpoſe of the Eternal Three concerning the heirs of promiſe, whoſe ſalvation was ſettled by two immutable things, in which it was impoſſible for God to lie, his counſel, his oath. His counſel, the reſult of his infinite wiſdom, confirmed by that ſacred oath which cannot poſſibly be broken. All his perfections ſtand engaged to ſee the ſovereign decree, thus ſolemnly ratified, carried into execution; for what was *ordered* is SURE—ſure as the throne of Jehovah, unchangeable as his nature, durable as his being. Though it be but a man's covenant, yet when it has been ſigned and ſealed according to law, none diſannulleth or addeth thereto. None can diſannul God's covenant, and he himſelf will

not.---"My covenant will I not break," ſays he, "nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips." *Pſalm* lxxxix. 34. "I will not add thereto, nor diminiſh from it: for I have ordered it in ALL things. I have not left one ſingle thing out, not the leaſt circumſtance: I have ſettled the whole plan by mine unerring wiſdom, and I will fulfil every tittle of it by mine almighty power. According to my will the courſe of nature and grace is infallibly directed, even the moſt minute events. Every hair is numbered. Not a ſparrow falls but by my divine decree."

How ſafely then may the heirs of promiſe depend upon a covenant God? And whenever they flee to Jeſus for refuge, what ſtrong conſolation may they draw from hence, that their ſalvation is fixed by the immutable counſel, and inviolable oath of the bleſſed Trinity?

The ſame divine teacher, who enabled them to believe thoſe truths for the farther eſtabliſhment of their faith, led them to diſcover the FREENESS of all covenant mercies. They are promiſed as free gifts. They are beſtowed to the praiſe of the glory of free grace. They are not conferred upon the worthy, but upon enemies, upon the ungodly, upon ſinners as ſinners. No conditions are required, no pre-requiſites are expected. The motives, which determine God to ſhew mercy to ſinners, are not taken from any good in them, or foreſeen to be in them. Not for

works of righteouſneſs which they have done, or can do; but according to his mercy he ſaveth them. He does all to the magnifying of the honours of his own mercy. His covenant was ſo contrived, carried into execution by the life and death of Jeſus, applied by the Holy Spirit, that according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. No fleſh ſhall glory in his preſence. Boaſting is for ever excluded; becauſe all is of grace. Wiſdom to teach the ſinner ſaving knowledge, righteouſneſs to juſtify him, ſtrength to keep him, comforts to bleſs him, heaven to receive him, theſe are the free gifts of covenant love: for by grace is he ſaved through faith, and that not of himſelf, it is the gift of God; not of works, leſt any man ſhould boaſt. Thus would the Lord hide pride from man, and would teach him practically ſuch ſcriptures as this—"Not for your ſakes do I this, ſaith the Lord, be it known unto you, but for mine holy name's ſake." *Ezek.* xxxvi.

Cloſely connected with this divine leſſon is the FULNESS of covenant mercies. Every thing needful for the ſalvation of the ſinner is fully, as well as freely, provided by the exceeding riches of grace, and is treaſured up by the Father's love in the fulneſs of the Son. To this the Spirit bears witneſs in the word of truth, and ſeals his witneſs upon the believer's heart. It pleaſed the Father that in the Word made fleſh ſhould ALL fulneſs

dwell, and that out of his fulneſs his people ſhould receive grace for grace. This is the infinite ocean. There is not a ſtream, not a drop of grace to be had, but from hence. Jeſus Chriſt, as God-man, has it all in himſelf, and for the ſame end, as the head has the ſenſes in itſelf. He has it to communicate to his members, a fulneſs of light and life, of ſenſe and underſtanding, of love and joy, yea, of every ſpiritual bleſſing. On him, as the head of the body, the church, every believing member is directed to live. On him muſt he depend at all times; and to him muſt he go for all things. If he ſeek pardon and peace, righteouſneſs and holineſs, a ſupply of his wants, ſtrength for his warfare, comforts under his miſeries, if he expect life in death, and life eternal, he muſt make continual uſe of the fulneſs of Jeſus: for in him dwelleth ALL the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily. It dwelleth in him, as in an overflowing fountain. The Father's love to his adopted children, the experience of it by the grace of the Spirit, are entirely in and from the ſalvation of Jeſus Chriſt. Out of his fulneſs comes every covenant mercy of the Godhead, and in a rich abundant ſtream, always flowing with ſome bleſſing or other into the believer's ſoul. The enjoyment of it on his part may not be always alike comfortable, but it is always alike ſure on God's part. Nothing can ſtop it. Nothing can turn its courſe. Unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return

again. The river of the water of life proceeds out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, and it will be running on till it come back into its own ocean. "The water that I will give him," ſays Jeſus, ſpeaking of the believer, "ſhall be in him a fountain of water ſpringing up into everlaſting life, and bringing with it the fulneſs of joy and pleaſures for evermore."

No man will ſee any reaſon to ſet out in the way to heaven, until he be made acquainted with thoſe truths. His judgment muſt be enlightened with the knowledge of them. He will never think of changing his courſe, until he be made ſenſible of his own ſinful and helpleſs ſtate: and when this is brought home to his conſcience, and he has nothing in himſelf left to truſt in, then he will be led to look abroad for help. The Spirit of God will teach him the doctrines of grace, the nature of the Godhead, the perſons in the Godhead, the covenant of the divine perſons, by which every grace and bleſſing was freely and fully provided, given by the Father to the Son, in whoſe fulneſs they were all laid up for the uſe of his body the church, and communicated to every member of it, through the influence of the Holy Spirit. Thus he is taught, that all is of grace from firſt to laſt. Whatever good a ſinner receives on earth, or enjoys in heaven, is ſo given, as to exclude all boaſting, and to lay every proud and ſelf-righteous principle in the duſt, that grace alone may wear the crown, and may have all the glory.

Here then, O my ſoul, is matter of cloſe examination. Doſt thou know thyſelf, thy ſtate and condition, and haſt thou fled from the wrath to come? Has the light of God's word ſhone into thy underſtanding, and made thee to ſee that thou art indeed ſet out in the way to heaven? How was this diſcovered to thee? Did the Holy Spirit ever convince thee of ſin, and that thou hadſt loſt the image and forfeited the favour of God? Didſt thou ever ſee thyſelf fallen in Adam, in him a child of wrath, a ruined miſerable ſinner? Haſt thou felt how utterly unable thou art to atone for thy ſins, or to make thyſelf holy? And waſt thou brought to this after many legal trials and ſelf-righteous efforts? At laſt forced to give up all hope in thyſelf, and to look to the Lord who made heaven and earth, from whom alone thy help could come?

And haſt thou been taught the true knowledge of the unity of the Godhead, and of the perſons in it, Father, Son, and Spirit, the covenant of the ever-bleſſed Three, and the abſolute ſecurity of all covenant mercies, promiſed by the Father, and engaged to be given to the Son, as the head of his body, the church, who is now actually as God-man in poſſeſſion of them, and by his Spirit he freely and fully beſtows them upon his members: for they will never ceaſe to be receiving out of his fulneſs grace for grace, until they receive out of the ſame fulneſs glory for glory.

O my ſoul, examine cloſely, and prove

thyſelf by the ſtandard of the divine word. Search and try, what the conviction of thy loſt eſtate has been. Was it deep and practical? Is it an abiding truth with thee, that there is no help, or hope, in thyſelf? And haſt thou fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope ſet before thee in the Lord Jeſus? Is thy knowledge of the Godhead mere theory, or is it brought into practice? Doſt thou enjoy the Father's love, through faith in the finiſhed ſalvation of the Son, by the influence of the Holy Spirit? This is the ſaving knowledge of the Godhead. And is this thine? Doſt thou honour the divine perſons, by acknowledging their immutable counſel, and immutable oath, entered into for the ſecurity of the heirs of promiſe, that they might truſt, and not be afraid? Doſt thou ſee with any clearneſs the abſolute ſafety of relying upon the promiſes of God, and doſt thou expect to draw from hence comfort to thy conſcience, and joy to thy heart?

If thou art indeed ſet out in the way to heaven, art thou ſettled in the knowledge of thy fallen ſtate? Haſt thou found thyſelf unable to do any thing, but to haſten on thy ruin? And from the ſight and ſenſe of this, haſt thou been led to ſee all undertaken for thee, and ſecured to thee, for time and eternity, in the covenant of the ever-bleſſed Trinity. Theſe truths lie at the very foundation of all comfortable walking with God. See that thou be well-grounded in them. The knowledge of thyſelf is to bring thee to God: the know-

ledge of God is to lead thee to walk with him. The one is to teach thee to renounce all truſt in thyſelf. The other is to ſhew thee that thou mayeſt ſafely place the confidence of thy heart on thy reconciled Father, thy Saviour, and thy guide. Look up to him then, O my ſoul, and be often praying to him, and ſaying—

"O Lord God, that which I ſee not, teach thou me. Keep me an humble diſciple in the ſchool of Chriſt. Let me be daily learning there, what I am in myſelf, a fallen ſinful creature, juſtly deſerving everlaſting deſtruction from thy preſence. O let me never loſe ſight of my want of a Saviour, nor ever be without the ſenſe of what he ſaid---"Without me ye can do nothing." Teach me this, thou eternal Spirit. Open thou mine underſtanding to underſtand the ſcriptures. What thou haſt revealed in them concerning the Godhead, and concerning the counſels and works of the ever-bleſſed Trinity, that reveal to my ſoul. Thou haſt declared, that no man can ſay Jeſus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt: O ſhine then into my dark mind, and lead me into the ſaving knowledge of the Lord Jeſus. Make me acquainted with his covenant undertakings, and his perfect fulfilling of them, that by reſting on his finiſhed ſalvation, I may find the Father's love in the Son, his Father my Father, and may be brought, through thy bleſſed influence, to have fellowſhip with the Father and the Son. O lead me into all truth, thou Spirit of wiſdom and revelation, that I

may know the things which belong to my peace, and may, through thee, be made wiſe unto ſalvation. *Amen.*

CHAP. II.

The believer is reconciled to God, and has the peace of God ruling in his conſcience, and they two walk together: becauſe they are now agreed.

IT is written in the prophets---"They ſhall be all taught of God"---every one of his children ſhall be brought to the knowledge of the truth, and what they have been taught in the underſtanding ſhall be made practical, that it may have its proper effect upon the conſcience. And this is anſwered, when it comes under the authority and power of the word of God, and faithfully accuſes or condemns according to that unerring rule.

Conſcience ſuppoſes the knowledge of ſome rule, and it conſiſts in comparing a man's ſtate or actions with that rule, in order to diſcover whether they agree with it, or not.

The rule is the ſcripture, the whole revealed will of God, which is the unerring, and the only ſtandard of right and wrong: for all ſcripture is given by the inſpiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, to teach the man of God what is truth, and to make him wiſe in it unto ſalvation. Fallen man has no means of

diſcovering the will of God, but as it is revealed to him. He has no innate knowledge. He has no implanted principles. He is born as ignorant of God, and of the things of God, as a wild aſs's colt. His underſtanding is darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in him, becauſe of the blindneſs of his heart. And he has no means in his own power of attaining any divine knowledge: for he cannot, by ſearching, find out God. The world by its wiſdom never did find him out. The Hottentots know as much of him as the Greeks and Romans did: indeed the natural man, let him be ever ſo wiſe, knoweth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them; becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned.

The ſcripture then is the only rule of right and wrong. Conſcience has no direction but this rule. Neither ethics, nor metaphyſics, no fancied light of dark nature, no lawleſs law of rebel nature, no human ſcience, whether pretended to be implanted, or by the uſe of reaſon to be acquired, have any right to guide the conſcience. Theſe are blind leaders of the blind. They undertake what they are not only unfit, but what they have no warrant for. A parcel of felons in jail may think what they will of their ſtate. They may take it upon them to form a mock court, and to try one another. They may acquit or condemn, as they pleaſe: but the judge and the jury will pay no regard to their fooliſh proceedings.

There is a word which is to try us at the laſt day, and by that we ſhould try ourſelves at preſent. It was revealed for this purpoſe. And when the revealed truth is clearly underſtood, then conſcience is acting aright; if it finds a true verdict for God, either accuſing, or elſe excuſing, according to the direction of his unerring word.

And this is the work of the Holy Spirit. He enlightened the judgment with the knowledge of the truth, in order to make it practical; which he effects by bringing the conſcience to ſubmit to the ſovereignty of God in the law, and to ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of God in the goſpel. Herein he diſplays the omnipotent power of his grace, according to the promiſe, *John* xvi. 8. He carries with demonſtration the conviction of guilt, and the conviction of righteouſneſs, to the conſcience. By the former he gives the ſinner a real heart-felt ſenſe of his ſin and miſery, and he acknowledges himſelf a convict of the law, juſtly deſerving all its penalties, in time and eternity. By the latter he ſets open a door of hope, ſhewing him the perfect righteouſneſs of the God-man, wrought out for ſuch guilty creatures as he is: he enables him to plead it before the throne, and to truſt in it for his acceptance; by which means, he finds relief in his conſcience, and comfort in his heart. Being juſtified by faith, he has peace with God, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.

What the Holy Spirit teaches, has life as

well as light in it. He accompanies his doctrine with the power of God. What he has revealed concerning the ſtate of mankind under the fall, he applies with divine evidence to the conſcience. Under his influence, the ſinner reads thoſe ſcriptures, and feels the truth of them. "As by one man ſin entered into the world, and death by ſin, ſo death paſſed upon all men, for that all have ſinned: through the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation: for it is written, there is none righteous, no not one; there is none that underſtandeth; there is none that ſeeketh after God: they are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one. Now we know, that what things ſoever the law ſaith, it commands them who are under the law, that every mouth may be ſtopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." His mouth is ſtopped. He has no plea to make. No excuſe left. What the law ſaith, he ſubſcribes to. The law brings him in guilty before God, and in his conſcience he bears his teſtimony to the law. He acknowledges it to be holy, juſt, and good, even in its penalties, which he deſerves to ſuffer. Formerly he tried in his own ſtrength, and took great pains to eſcape them, but now he gives over all thoſe ſelf-righteous attempts. He found, that he laboured in vain to atone for his ſins, or to make himſelf holy. He groans, being burdened under the ruins of the fall. His igno-

rance, rebellion, apoſtacy, his corruption in every faculty of ſoul and body, render him unable to take one ſtep in his return to God. He owns it, and confeſſes, that without Chriſt he can do nothing.

O my ſoul, conſider, whether God has taught thee this knowledge of thyſelf. It is abſolutely neceſſary to reconcile thee to him, and to his ways. Thou wilt never heartily agree to walk with him by faith, ſo ſong as thou haſt any thing of thine own to truſt in, or to draw comfort from. Examine then; art thou ſenſible of thy fall, and doſt thou feel the ſad effects of it? Doſt thou know what it is to be alienated from the life of God? What! doſt thou find to this day the oppoſition of thy ſinful nature to the holy law, the fleſh luſting in thee againſt the ſpirit? Has God thus convinced thee of ſin? If he has, then in thy conſcience thou ſubmitteſt to what the law ſays of thy ſtate. Thy mouth is ſtopped, and thou art guilty before God. Thou haſt nothing of thine own to urge in arreſt of judgment. This is an enlightened conſcience: ſo far it ſpeaks for God, and is guided by his unerring word. O pray to the Lord, the Spirit, and beg of him to guide thee into all truth, that he may bring thy conſcience to ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of Jeſus, and to be a faithful witneſs for him.

This is his proper work in the ſoul, and what he undertook in the everlaſting covenant. "When he is come," ſays Chriſt, "he

ſhall convince the world of righteouſneſs; he ſhall teſtify of me, that I am made of God righteouſneſs to believers; and he ſhall glorify me, as Jehovah their righteouſneſs: thus he ſhall teach them my righteouſneſs, with which the Father is ſatisfied; and he ſhall, through faith, apply it effectually to their conſciences, and they ſhall alſo be ſatisfied with it." Being juſtified by faith, they ſhall have peace with God, through their Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Righteouſneſs is a perfect conformity to the law: if it be tried by the balance of the ſanctuary, it is full weight; if by the ſtandard, it is full meaſure; if judgment be laid to the line and righteouſneſs to the plummet, it is quite upright. There is no defect in it of any kind. This is the righteouſneſs of the law--it muſt be perfect and continual, failing in no one point: for the unrighteous ſhall not inherit the kingdom of God. And it is an adjudged caſe, that there is none righteous, no not one. It is left upon record, that ALL have ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God; therefore, by the deeds of the law, there ſhall no fleſh be juſtified in his ſight.

When the Holy Spirit has convinced a ſinner of his being in this unrighteous ſtate, then it becomes an important enquiry--how can the Judge of all the earth ever look upon and treat a ſinner, as if he was a righteous perſon? To which the goſpel anſwers directly--"God hath made Chriſt to be ſin for us, who knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſ-

neſs of God IN him." This was agreed upon in the covenant of the eternal Three. The Father undertook to maintain the honour and dignity of his law and juſtice. His co-equal Son undertook for his people to come in their nature, and to ſtand in their place and ſtead; to act for them, and to ſuffer for them. As their ſurety, he made himſelf anſwerable for their debt of obedience, and for their debt of ſuffering. Accordingly, when the great law-fulfiller cometh into the world, he ſaith--"Lo, I COME TO DO THY WILL, O God." He did it in his infinitely holy life, in which he magnified the precepts of the law, and made them everlaſtingly honourable. He ſuffered it in his infinitely holy paſſion, bearing the ſins and ſorrows of his people, their curſe and wrath in his body and ſoul upon the tree, until the immenſe debt being paid, he cried out in the triumph of a conquering, though a dying Jeſus—"IT IS FINISHED:" for through death he conquered death, and him that had the power of death; that is, the devil: he finiſhed the tranſgreſſion, and made an end of ſins, and made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlaſting righteouſneſs.

This is the great leading truth of the goſpel, in which the peace of conſcience is principally concerned. The juſtly offended God is here revealed under the character of a reconciled Father. He gave his Son to be a covenant of the people; who was to fulfil all covenant engagements for them, and he has

fulfilled them all. The end of his living and dying for them is anſwered. He has finiſhed the tranſgreſſion, and has made peace by the blood of the croſs. He has brought in everlaſting righteouſneſs by his divine obedience, and the Lord is well pleaſed with *him* for his righteouſneſs ſake; yea, he is well pleaſed alſo with his body the church. He looks upon all the members, as he looks upon the head. He accepts them in the beloved. He beholds them in him with perfect delight, and reſts in his love. He is his Father, and their Father. He is related to his whole family in heaven and earth in the cloſeſt bonds of fatherly affection, and he makes his love known to them, and ſheds it abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghoſt. He would have all his children to addreſs him under his dear name---OUR FATHER *which art in heaven*; and to expect from his fatherly love all ſpiritual bleſſings in Chriſt Jeſus.

When this comfortable doctrine is received into the conſcience, it ſilences guilt, and produces peace with God. The goſpel comes with full authority to eſtabliſh it in the conſcience: for it is therein revealed and propoſed to our belief, under the character of a divine RECORD, made authentic and properly enrolled in the court of heaven. The witneſſes are the eternal Three. Their record is in the nature of a covenant, confirmed by their joint counſel, and ratified by their joint oath---the two immutable things, in which it is impoſſi-

ble for God to lie. He graciouſly vouchſafed to give the heirs of promiſe this perfect ſecurity for their ſalvation, that after they had fled to Jeſus for refuge, there might be an end of all ſtrife in their conſciences, and they might have ſtrong conſolation. Accordingly we read ---" There are Three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt, and theſe Three are ONE." A record among men, is an authentic teſtimony in writing, entered by authority in one of the king's courts, in order to preſerve the proceedings had upon any ſuit. This record contains the final determination of the judges in that cauſe, and is their memorial of it, and therefore imports in itſelf ſuch uncontrolable evidence, as to admit of no proof to the contrary. The matter of the record is never allowed to be tried by a jury, but is of ſuch credit as not to be queſtioned in any inſtance. This is the nature of a record in law. And if we receive the witneſs of men, certainly the witneſs of God is greater; for this is the witneſs of God, which he hath witneſſed of his Son---namely ---" He hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." To which the Spirit beareth witneſs: becauſe the Spirit is truth. He has revealed the covenant of life and peace, which was between the Father and the Son; he has entered it upon record, and every word of the record may be pleaded: for it is allowed to be good and valid in the court of heaven. As a powerful advocate, he pleads the perfect ful-

filling of all righteouſneſs in the life and death of the God-man; and the Father's perfect acceptance of what he did and ſuffered, as the full redemption-price for all his people, and he carries his cauſe in the court of conſcience. The awakened ſinner is convinced, that the work of Jeſus is a finiſhed ſalvation, and that the divine record is a ſufficient warrant for him to believe in it. Accordingly he gives it credit, and is enabled to plead it againſt guilt and fear. Upon which he finds peace with God. Truſting to the blood of ſprinkling for pardon, and to the righteouſneſs of Jeſus for acceptance; he then ſees God reconciled to him, and that reconciles him to God, and by the Spirit of adoption he cries---"Abba, Father."

But, perhaps, it may be ſaid--"I believe this, but I do not find peace in my conſcience." Nay, but you do not believe it; if you did, it would certainly bring preſent relief: for guilt comes from the broken law, and from the apprehenſion of puniſhment deſerved; but the law has been reſtored to its dignity, and made infinitely honourable by the righteouſneſs of Jeſus; how can you believe this, and yet be under guilt? The puniſhment was laid upon Jeſus, and he ſuffered all that was due to his people, as their atoning ſacrifice; how can you believe this, and yet fear that juſtice will puniſh you? A debtor would not fear to be arreſted, if his ſurety had paid the ſum, and got him a full diſcharge. A felon, with the

king's pardon in his pocket, would diſhonour it greatly, if he was to live in continual dread and terror of ſuffering for his crime. Examine carefully, and pray for the right underſtanding of your caſe; and depend upon it, you will find, that either you do not believe the matter of fact, or the record concerning it.

The matter of fact is the method provided for quieting the guilty conſcience—a proviſion of exceeding rich grace, and of everlaſting efficacy. The Father gave the Son to be the ſurety for his people, and to live and to die for them, and in their ſtead. The Son has finiſhed the work which the Father gave him to do, and is become the author of their eternal ſalvation.

The record of this fact is in the ſcripture. Father, Son, and Spirit, the three witneſſes in heaven, have by covenant and oath atteſted, that there is life for every one who believeth in Jeſus. "God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life."

Now conſider, of what do you doubt? Has Jeſus made full atonement for ſin, and brought in everlaſting righteouſneſs? Has the Father demonſtrated, again and again, his perfect delight in his perſon, and his infinite ſatisfaction in his work? Certainly you cannot queſtion this doctrine, if you believe the ſcripture to be a divine revelation. Do you doubt then of God's free promiſe, or of his faithfulneſs

to fulfil it? What! Can his word be broken? Can his promiſe fail? His word and promiſe ratified in the immutable covenant, and ſealed with the immutable oath of the eternal Three? This is your warrant to believe. And do you queſtion the veracity of it? "He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar." O what a dreadful ſin to give the lie to the Holy Trinity! The Father ſays, Whoſoever cometh; the Son ſays, All that come unto me, ſhall be ſaved; the Spirit ſays, Come, whoſoever will, let him take of the water of life freely, and be ſaved. Are not theſe faithful ſayings worthy of all credit? eſpecially as they are delivered with divine authority, under the great ſeal of heaven. If doubts ſtill remain, pray againſt them, and meditate upon the unreaſonableneſs as well as the wickedneſs of them, and continue to hear and to read the word (for faith cometh, and groweth too, by hearing) that you may be enabled to put honor upon it, by venturing your ſoul upon the divine faithfulneſs, to make it good to you.

Perhaps you may believe the record, which God hath given of his Son, but you cannot do it with ſtedfaſtneſs: you can, at times, ſtay your mind upon God with ſweet peace, but you are not able to maintain it: yea, you loſe it when you want it moſt. How, in this caſe, ſhall the believer keep the peace of God ruling always in his conſcience?

It is to be maintained in the ſame way, by which it was firſt received. It came by be-

lieving, and is thereby ſtrengthened. By the ſhedding of the blood of Jeſus Chriſt, peace was made between God and man; by the ſprinkling of his blood, peace is made between man and God. When this is applied to the conſcience by the Holy Spirit, and received by faith, there is a continual preſervative againſt guilt—"For the blood of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth from all ſin." Here is the witneſs of God; and it is always the ſame. This believed will always bring the ſame cleanſing virtue, and keep the conſcience purged from dead works. If at any time guilt defile it, then unbelief has entered, and has been denying, either that the blood of Chriſt does cleanſe from all ſin, or that the divine teſtimony concerning it does deſerve credit. Guilt cannot eaſily enter into the conſcience but by one of theſe two ways. Examine, and ſee which it is. Do you doubt of the virtue of Chriſt's blood, or of the truth of God's record concerning it?

You reply, I dare not queſtion either of them; yet nevertheleſs I cannot, with any ſettled comfort, maintain peace with God. But it is your privilege to maintain it, confirmed to you by the royal charter of grace, and ratified in it by many expreſs promiſes. Jeſus has made peace by the blood of his croſs; and if you believe what the God of truth ſays of it, peace ſhould rule in your heart always: for all things are well ordered for you, and ſure in the everlaſting covenant. On the part

of God, all is unalterably fixed and ſettled. What is it, then, which unſettles you? Is it ſomething you find in yourſelf? Is it from indwelling ſin, remaining corruption, a body of ſin and death, or from the weakneſs of your faith, and of your other graces? What! have you forgotten, that from all theſe the blood of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth? Is it from a ſuſpicion, that your peace is not right, becauſe it ebbs and flows? This ſhould humble, but not diſcourage you: becauſe there is a gracious proviſion made to remove your ſuſpicion. God has taken the charge both of you and of your peace: he keeps both by his mighty power, as it is written, The peace of God which ſurpaſſeth all underſtanding, ſhall keep with a ſafe guard your hearts and minds in Chriſt Jeſus. You are as ſafe in the hand of God, at the loweſt ebb, as at the higheſt ſpring-tide of ſenſible comfort: becauſe your ſafeguard is almighty, and he is equally concerned about your peace, whether you feel it or not. Your ſenſe of it may vary, but he varies not. There is in him no variableneſs, nor ſhadow of turning. How ſhould the belief of this ſtay your mind upon your God, and keep guilt out of the conſcience, even when you are walking in darkneſs, and have no light!

O my ſoul! meditate upon thoſe precious truths. Give thyſelf wholly to them. Conſider how deeply they enter into the very being of thy peace. Unleſs they be underſtood, thou

canſt not know the way of peace; and unleſs they be received by faith, thy conſcience will not be purged from guilt and unbelief. And while theſe defile it, thou canſt not look upon God as reconciled, or delight thyſelf in him or his ways. Can two walk together except they be agreed? But when they are agreed, and of one mind, then walking with God becomes pleaſant, and all his paths are peace.

Search, then, and examine thyſelf, O my ſoul, and that not lightly, and after the manner of diſſemblers with God, but cloſely and thoroughly by the light of the divine word, and under the teaching of the divine Spirit. Doſt thou underſtand what is revealed concerning the way of peace—what was covenanted in the counſel of the eternal Three—and what has been done in conſequence of it? Jeſus Chriſt is the great peace-maker. He has made peace through the blood of his croſs. The Father ſent him, gave him to be a covenant of the people; to fulfil for them all righteouſneſs, and to be their atoning ſacrifice. The Father has ſeen the work which he gave him to do, and has accepted it; is perfectly ſatisfied with it, and therefore is infinitely delighted with him, and with all his. He would now be known by the high ſtyle and title of the GOD OF PEACE. Fury is not in him to thoſe whom he ſees in the beloved. He is a Father, fully, for ever reconciled to all his children in Chriſt Jeſus. He loves them, as he loves him, with every kind feeling of

the moſt tender parent. And he will bring every one of them to partake with their glorified head of the bleſſings of his everlaſting love.

If thine underſtanding be enlightened with this knowledge of God, is it effectual in thy conſcience? Canſt thou plead it there? This is the principal thing. Haſt thou a good conſcience, freed from guilt and condemnation, by believing the record which God hath given of his Son? He is well pleaſed with him for his righteouſneſs ſake. His ſoul delighted in the ſweet-ſmelling ſavor of his Son's ſacrifice. Becauſe he humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs, therefore the Father hath highly exalted him. This is the witneſs of God. Doſt thou yield to it, and give it full credit? What! canſt thou ſet to thy ſeal that God is true, and that what ſatisfied him has perfectly ſatisfied thee, and therefore the peace of God rules in thy conſcience always, and by all means?

Remember, this is thy privilege. Thou art called to the enjoyment of it. The evidence is as full as could be deſired, for the ending of all ſtrife in thy conſcience. The greateſt honour thou canſt put upon the divine witneſſes, is ſo to end it, as to ſuffer no appeal to be made from their decree. Thy conſcience ſhould join iſſue. It ſhould ſay the ſame that God does. It ſhould plead thy diſcharge from guilt, under the broad ſeal of heaven; and ſhould ſtop the mouth of unbelief with thoſe

words, written in golden letters in the royal charter of grace—"There is NO condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus—they are freely forgiven ALL treſpaſſes. They are juſtified from all things. Thy ſins and iniquities," ſays God himſelf, "will I remember NO MORE." Theſe are the immutable words of truth. They cannot be broken. O my ſoul, put honor upon them. Believe them without doubt or wavering. Why doſt thou draw back thy confidence? Truſt, and not be afraid. Thou mayeſt ſafely venture to believe all that the Lord hath ſpoken. He will make it good; and the more thou believeſt, the more will be made good. More faith will bring thee in a richer revenue of peace. The Lord increaſe thy faith. May it entirely influence thy conſcience, that it may agree with God; neither queſtioning the infinite value of the righteouſneſs and atonement of Immanuel, nor yet the faithfulneſs of his promiſe, under which thou claimeſt them—"WHOSOEVER WILL may take them freely."

Let thy faith be ever ſo well eſtabliſhed, yet thou wilt meet with ſomething every day to try it; but remember, the foundation on which thou ſtandeſt, cannot fail, and none, nothing ſhall remove thee from it. The Lord brought thee to build upon this foundation. He hath begun the good work, and he will not leave his work unfiniſhed. The top-ſtone ſhall certainly be brought forth with ſhouting GRACE—GRACE: for his love is like himſelf.

His purpoſes, his word, his works change not. What if thou feel many things wrong in thyſelf, thou art ſometimes low in ſpirits; thou canſt not be pleaſed with thy corruption, and thou art not pleaſed with thy duties; thy graces are weak, thy love not as it ſhould be, thy beſt ſervices unprofitable; yet theſe very things rightly underſtood, and improved by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, will be the means of eſtabliſhing thy conſcience in the peace of God. They will lead thee every day to a greater dependence upon ſovereign grace: for they will leave thee nothing to truſt in, but the righteouſneſs and the atonement of Immanual; nothing to keep thee, but his faithfulneſs to his word and work; and nothing to bleſs thee, but his free covenant mercy. Thus they will work together for thy good. Trials will ſettle thee. Enemies will confirm thee in peace. Troubles will bring thee nearer to God. Amidſt all diſcouragements thou wilt have this promiſe to ſtay thy ſoul upon—"I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee." His friendſhip is fixed. It ſprings from the purpoſe and love of his own breaſt, and therefore was and is always unchangeably the ſame in him. Whom he loveth, he loveth unto the end.

Well then, O my ſoul, thou haſt examined thyſelf. How is it with thee? Doſt thou know the way of peace? Art thou at peace with God, being juſtified by faith? Canſt thou plead this peace, and maintain it in thy con-

ſcience? Is it a good conſcience, does it witneſs for God? Is it a pure conſcience, cleanſed from guilt and condemnation? Is it ſatisfied, that the Father is perfectly reconciled through the life and death of his Son? And is it ſatisfied with the divine record, giving thee a free grant of the benefits of his life and death, and putting thee into poſſeſſion by believing? Art thou of one heart and of one mind in this matter with the Father, and now being at peace with him, agreed to walk in his way? If indeed he has been thus gracious unto thee, bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul, and all that is within me praiſe him for the exceeding riches of his love. What a mercy is it, that he has brought thee into the way of peace! O go on: fear not. Set out daily with an holy humble boldneſs to walk with thy God. And for the guiding of thy feet in his way, and that thy ſteps may not decline from it, be diligent in hearing and reading the word of God. Study it. Pray over it. Mind what encouragement it gives thee—"Having therefore, brethren, boldneſs to enter into the holieſt by the blood of Jeſus, by that new and living way, which he hath conſecrated for us, through the veil, that is to ſay, his fleſh, and having an high-prieſt over the houſe of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full aſſurance of faith, having our hearts ſprinkled from an evil conſcience, and our bodies waſhed with pure water." *Heb.* x. 19, 20, &c. What perfect peace is here proclaimed to the children

of God! Sin had ſeparated them from him, but there is acceſs through Jeſus. He is the way to the Father. He is a new way, in oppoſition to the old way of works, which upon the fall was ſhut for ever. He is a living way, all that are alive to God live by the faith of the Son of God. He is a conſecrated way, every thing needful for their holy walk being provided in him. And they are required to walk in this way with boldneſs; truſting to the blood of Jeſus, and depending on the interceſſion of the high-prieſt over the houſe of God, they have acceſs with confidence in the holieſt. It is their undoubted privilege to draw near with a true heart, not like a double-minded man, wavering and unſtable; but with full aſſurance of faith, entirely ſatisfied that God in Chriſt has nothing in his breaſt, but love towards them; therefore they ſhould believe in him, and ſerve him without fear, having their hearts ſprinkled from an evil conſcience, maintaining peace with God through the continual application of the blood of Jeſus, and having their bodies waſhed with pure water, body and ſoul being cleanſed from the guilt and filth of ſin by the waſhing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt.

O may this be my happy experience. May I ever have grace to draw near to my reconciled Father with a good conſcience. Yea, Lord, this is my heart's deſire. I would walk with thee day by day in perfect peace.

O deny me not the requeſt of my lips. Glory be to thy free love, that through Jeſus I am ſuffered to have acceſs into thy preſence, and am commanded to come with boldneſs into the holieſt of all. Lo, I come before thee, holy Father, to plead the blood-ſhedding and the righteouſneſs of thy dear Son; and I hope my plea will be admitted, through the interceſſion of the high-prieſt of the houſe of God. O look, thou God of peace, upon the face of thy Beloved. See me in him. I deſire to be found in him. And for his ſake let the faithful witneſs for thy love in Jeſus abide with me, that in hearing and reading thy word, in prayer and meditation, he may increaſe my faith in thee and love to thee.

O God the Holy Ghoſt, I beſeech thee to make practical upon my heart what thou haſt revealed in ſcripture of the Father's love. Deliver me from guilt and condemnation by the ſprinkling of the blood of Jeſus. Apply it effectually. Apply it continually. Help me to believe with more comfort in my conſcience, and with more ſtedfaſtneſs in my walk, that his blood cleanſeth from all ſin. O bleſſed Spirit, carry on thy work in my ſoul. Lead me from faith to faith, that I may at all times have freedom to enter within the vail to a reconciled God and Father, and may be able to maintain peace with him, againſt doubts and fears, againſt corruptions and enemies. O teach me to draw near to him with a true

heart, ſtedfaſtly perſuaded of his love, and in full aſſurance of faith. This is thy gracious office: O fulfil it in me, that my heart may be ſprinkled from an evil conſcience, and my body waſhed with pure water. Let me find grace ſufficient for me, for Jeſus ſake; to whom, with thee, O Father, and the eternal Spirit, three perſons in one Jehovah, be equal honour and glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

CHAP. III.

The believer in his heart cleaves to God, and walks with him in love.

THIS depends entirely upon a good conſcience. There can be no love of God, unleſs there be firſt peace with God. No convinced ſinner can love him, until he believes him to be reconciled. While guilt remains in the conſcience, enmity will keep its place in the heart: for ſo long as he looks upon his ſins unpardoned, and God the juſt avenger of them, he muſt conſider him as a jealous God, and a conſuming fire. In this view there is every thing that can increaſe his guilty fears. And while theſe defile the conſcience; inſtead of walking with God, he would run away from him, and like the firſt offenders, he would fooliſhly try to hide himſelf from the preſence of God.

But when the Holy Spirit has diſcovered the way of peace, and has enabled the ſinner to find peace, being pardoned and juſtified through faith in Chriſt Jeſus, then he looks upon God in another light He can view him, according as he has proclaimed himſelf ---the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs and truth, keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, and tranſgreſſion, and ſin. Under this endearing character, the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is revealed in ſcripture. Thus would he be conſidered in the covenant of grace---related in the neareſt bond of affection to all his children. He is their Father, the Father of mercies, freely loving, freely forgiving, freely accepting them in the beloved. The holy Spirit convinces them of it, and ſheds the Father's love to them abroad in their hearts; the ſenſe of which ſweetly inclines them to love him again. Love begets love. God has put on the tender bowels of an ever-loving parent, and he gives them the affection of dutiful children. They love him, becauſe he firſt loved them. Then it is the delight of their ſouls to cultivate and improve this love on their part, and it becomes their heaven upon earth to walk with their God in the ways wherein he has appointed to meet them, to love them, and to bleſs them.

The main point then in the chriſtian walk, is to know how to maintain peace in the conſcience: becauſe this is a powerful motive

upon which the believer firſt ſets out, and it is the great ſpring which keeps him going on. While his conſcience continues pure and undefiled, and the peace of God rules in it, all is well. He does not ſtop, he does not halt, in the way. But when guilt enters, unbelief certainly follows cloſe after it, and then there is a freſh controverſy in the court of conſcience. Many doubts ariſe, and afford matter for ſtrife. and debate. The ſenſe of peace is not only diſturbed, but is alſo for a time deſtroyed by ſuch ſuſpicions as theſe--- "Am I freely pardoned?---Is God fully reconciled to me?---Is he ſtill my loving Father? I fear not. I have done ſo and ſo.--- He is certainly diſpleaſed with me, and therefore I dare not approach him, as I uſed to do, with love and confidence." This is an evil conſcience. It is not purged from dead works; becauſe guilt is ſtill in it, and this keeps the ſoul at a diſtance from God. It begets a coldneſs and a ſhyneſs to him, and by ſhutting out the comfortable ſenſe of his love, makes way for fear of wrath. Then the motives to walk with God loſe their influence, and an evil heart of unbelief tempts the man to depart from the living God.

Look well then, O my ſoul, to this leading truth, which has ſuch univerſal influence over the chriſtian walk. Attend to the peace of thy conſcience. See it be true peace, and mind it be well ſettled. Learn to maintain it upon goſpel motives. The heart follows the

determination of conſcience; and cleaves to the Lord, or departs from him, according as the conſcience excuſes or accuſes. It is therefore abſolutely neceſſary for our peace, that we ſhould know how God has ſhewn himſelf reconciled in Chriſt Jeſus. This character of him in the ſcriptures ſhould be ſtudied. Whoever has been enabled to call him Abba, Father, ſhould implore the aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit for an increaſe of faith, and ſhould make uſe of all appointed means for his growth in the knowledge of the love of his heavenly Father. The apoſtle is upon this ſubject in *Romans* v.—a chapter abounding with powerful arguments to eſtabliſh the peace of God in the conſcience; in order that the love of God may rule in the heart. He gives us this account of the privileges of a juſtified man. He has peace with God through Jeſus—by whom he has free acceſs to God—is in a ſtate of grace---ſtands in it by the power of God---has reaſon to rejoice (come what will) in hope of the glory to be revealed---and whatever he meets with in the way to glory ſhould increaſe the rejoicing of his hope, and confirm his heart in the love of God to him. Obſerve how divinely the apoſtle ſpeaks---" Therefore being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: by whom alſo we have acceſs by faith into this grace wherein we ſtand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God; and not only ſo, but we rejoice in tri-

bulations alſo, knowing well that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; and hope maketh not aſhamed, becauſe the love of God is ſhed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghoſt, who is given unto us."

What privileges! how many, how free, how bleſſed are here declared to be the portion of the juſtified man, which he is to enjoy in his reconciled God! Each of them tending to eſtabliſh peace in his conſcience, and love in his heart, that he may delight himſelf in God and in his ways. The firſt and chief bleſſing in experience, which draws after it all the reſt, is the Spirit---

The Holy Ghoſt is given unto him, to be a witneſs for Jeſus, and to ſhed abroad the Father's love through him. He comes as the Spirit of life to quicken the ſoul, which had been dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, and to bring it to the knowledge of ſalvation, which he does, ſecondly, by the gift of faith.

Being juſtified by faith. He enables the ſinner to believe in the finiſhed work of the God-man, and to truſt to the free grant of it in the word of God; whereby he ſees himſelf fully juſtified: Through the atonement of Jeſus freed from ſin and guilt; through the righteouſneſs of Jeſus entitled to life and glory, and therefore, thirdly, he has

Peace with God through Jeſus Chriſt his Lord--He ſees God is at peace with him---perfectly and continually reconciled. The

peace is everlaſting which was made through the blood of the everlaſting covenant. The belief of this quiets and ſatisfies the ſinner's conſcience; which being purged by the blood, and juſtified by the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt his Lord, is at peace, is freed from guilty fears, and is reconciled to God, yea to the juſtice of God, who can now be juſt, and yet the juſtifier of the ungodly. To what high honour is he then called? He is admitted into friendſhip with God, and has,

Fourthly, *Acceſs by faith into this grace, wherein he ſtands*---acceſs to a mercy-ſeat, to which he is invited to come freely, as a beloved child to an affectionate parent. Boldneſs and acceſs with confidence are required and commanded. "Let us come boldly to the throne of grace: having boldneſs to enter into the holieſt by the blood of Jeſus," let us by faith make much uſe of that new and living way, which he hath opened for us. O what a mercy is it thus to have acceſs to a gracious Father! How much is the mercy increaſed by his ſettling his children in it! "We STAND in it," ſays the Apoſtle, denoting the being fixed in a ſtate of perfect acceptance, conferred by ſovereign grace, brought into it by unchangeable love, and kept in it by the power of a faithful God. How ſtrengthening to faith, how encouraging to hope! for,

Fifthly, *We rejoice in hope of the glory of*

God. Faith relies upon the truth of what God hath promiſed, and hope waits for the enjoyment of the good in the promiſe, but more eſpecially for the glory which is to be revealed. This hope of glory is full of rejoicing: becauſe every thing which hope looks at and draws its joy from, depends on the truth and faithfulneſs of a covenant God. There can be no failing on his part, and therefore on the believer's there can be no diſappointment. On this ground hope caſts its anchor, both ſure and ſtedfaſt, and finds all ſafe during the ſtorms of life, yea, has many a ſweet foretaſte of the promiſed glory, brought into the ſoul by theſe very ſtorms: for,

Sixthly, *We rejoice in tribulations alſo.* Theſe are ſo far from taking away the joy of the juſtified man, that they tend greatly to increaſe it, and to make it more holy, as well as more happy. Tribulations produce a plentiful harveſt of bleſſings; they bring forth

Patience, giving occaſion to exerciſe the graces of the Spirit, to find the truth and the power of them, and thereby working ſubmiſſion under the croſs to the will of God. "It is good for me," ſays David, "that I have been afflicted;" his troubles brought him to God.---"Before I was afflicted, I went aſtray." His troubles kept him near to God, dependent on the divine ſtrength to bear them with patience; and for an happy iſſue out of them. Whereby he learnt

Experience, which follows ſuffering and patience. Tribulations teach us what we are as ſinners, and what God is to his reconciled children. They make us ſenſible of our weakneſs, and of our being ſtrong only in the Lord ----of our miſery, and of his comforts---of what we deſerve, and of what he ſaves us from---they bring us to live out of ourſelves, upon the ſure mercies of a covenant God: whereby our hope in him being tried, and by trials confirmed, we diſcover his love to us in ſuffering; and by daily experience become quite ſatisfied, that our

Hope is the grace of the Holy Spirit: for it anſwers the ſcripture-character; it rejoices in tribulation. It has good reaſon ſo to do. It experiences God's faithfulneſs. Every thing promiſed being made good to us in time, we thereby grow up into the full aſſurance of hope, that we ſhall not fail of receiving the promiſed glory. And this

Hope maketh not aſhamed, becauſe the love of God is ſhed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghoſt, who is given unto us. He is given to ſatisfy our hearts of the love of God to us, and to lead us to ſtudy the nature and the perfections of his love. Behold! what manner of love, what a free, full, ſovereign, and everlaſting love, the Father hath beſtowed upon us. It is actually beſtowed and enjoyed by the power of the Holy Ghoſt. He ſhows us how the Father loved us, even when we were without ſtrength; yea, herein God commend-

eth his love towards us, in that while we were ſinners and enemies, he gave his Son to live and die for us, much more then being now juſtified, we ſhall be ſaved from wrath, and brought to glory, through him. How does this commend and ſet off the love of God! It is the firſt cauſe of all the graces here mentioned, and beſtows them upon the moſt unworthy. Faith, juſtification by faith, acceſs to God, ſtanding in a juſtified ſtate, rejoicing in hope of glory, and rejoicing in the way to it, even in tribulations, becauſe they exerciſe and improve patience, and put our graces to ſuch trials, as convince us, that they are the true graces of the Holy Spirit, and that we ſhall never be aſhamed of our hope in God. In this golden chain of experience, love is the uppermoſt link. It was the firſt, and draws after it all the reſt. The free love of the Father gave his Son for us, and with him gave us all things. The ſame love has now given his Spirit to us, and he has enabled us to know and to believe, that we are juſtified, have acceſs to a reconciled God, ſtand accepted before him, &c. and that he is our loving God and Father in Jeſus. The ſenſe of this warms the heart, and ſweetly and powerfully influences the affections to delight in, and to walk in love with ſuch an exceedingly gracious and merciful God.

In this delightful portion of ſcripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us, how he bring ſinners to know that God loves them. It is by believ-

ing in the righteouſneſs and atonement of the Son of God. Hence ſpring peace and love---peace with God in the conſcience, and love to God in the heart. There is an inſeparable connection between thoſe two graces. The one cannot exiſt without the other. Whoever knows the God of peace, will find that God is love: for being juſtified by faith, he will thereby ſee that God is at peace with him, and himſelf in a ſtate of free acceptance before him: in which he ſhall ſtand and be kept ſafe, until he receive the promiſed glory. The hope of which will be confirmed by his daily experience of God's faithfulneſs, making all things, even tribulations, work together for his good in the way to glory: thus will the Holy Spirit ſatisfy him of the love of God to his ſoul. And the perſuaſion of his love begets love. It ſoftens the hard heart. It warms the cold heart. It works kindly upon all the affections; and by ſetting before them every poſſible good to be enjoyed in their reconciled God, it mightily diſpoſes them to ſeek their ſupreme happineſs in walking humbly and cloſely with him.

Attend then, O my ſoul, to this ſcripture. Meditate upon the experience of which it treats. Pray for it. Pray for more of it. And above all, obſerve the great truth here taught thee by the Holy Ghoſt, namely, that thou canſt not have any true love of God, but what ariſes from the ſenſe of his being at peace with thee in Jeſus. O beware of falſe teachers: for

there is great reaſon. Many talk big of their loving God for his own inherent lovelineſs. A fundamental miſtake. Myſtics, Quakers, natural religion men, dreaming metaphyſicians, and the motley tribe of moraliſts and deiſts, pretend to love an abſolute God, without viewing him in the covenant of grace, or as he has revealed himſelf in the incarnation of his Son. There has been no love of this kind in any heart upon earth for near ſix thouſand years. Adam in paradiſe might love him thus. But when driven out of paradiſe for ſin, he could love him ſo no more. The promiſed ſeed of the woman, the word made fleſh, became then the object of his faith, and the only ground of his love. The ſcripture has clearly determined this---"We love him, becauſe he firſt loved us---And in this was manifeſted the love of God towards us, becauſe that God ſent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." When the Holy Ghoſt has taught this love of God to ſinners, and by believing has manifeſted it to their hearts; then they love him upon chriſtian principles; and ſinners can not love him upon any other. They love him for that infinite mercy which led him to ſend his only-begotten Son into the world to finiſh the ſalvation of his people. They love him for ſending the Holy Ghoſt to enable them to ſee the everlaſting ſufficiency of this ſalvation, and to believe the record of God concerning it; whereby they come to experience how

much the Father loved them. This is heaven begun. The Father's love ſhed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghoſt is the foretaſte of glory. Whoever enjoys it, has found what is more to be deſired than gold, yea, than much fine gold, ſweeter alſo than honey and the honeycomb. O, it is indeed heaven upon earth. To preſerve it, to improve it, is become the only ſtudy of the happy believer. The panting of his ſoul is after more of this love. The prayer of his faith is, "O thou eternal Spirit, help me ſo to walk with my moſt loving Father, as that I may maintain peace with him in my conſcience, and a growing love to him in my heart, until thou bring me to the enjoyment of everlaſting peace and love."

The prayer of a righteous man prevaileth much, being offered with energy. By the love of the Spirit it is anſwered. He not only preſerves, but alſo increaſes his own graces. He leads the believer to freſh diſcoveries of the Father's love, and puts him into poſſeſſion of the exceeding rich treaſures of it. He helps him to draw very ſtrong arguments for the comfort of his heart from the perfect FREENESS of divine love. Thus he reaſons—

Although I am beſet with temptations, and aſſaulted with corruptions, and in a world of troubles, yet I need not fear, but God will bring me ſafe through all: for I know he loves me. It is plain he does. I could never have

loved him, unleſs he had firſt freely loved me. My love is only the reflection of his. I have been convinced of ſin, but it was not from myſelf: the conviction was of God. I have been convinced of righteouſneſs, and I put my whole truſt in the righteouſneſs of Jeſus. He is the only ground of my hope. I now reſt my ſoul upon the ſure foundation, which he hath laid. And this faith is not of myſelf. It is the gift of God. I aſcribe it to his ſovereign grace, that I have been enabled to look upon the Father as reconciled to me, pardoning me through the blood-ſhedding of his Son, accounting me righteous through the obedience of his Son, and in him accepting, loving, and bleſſing me. How could I experience theſe things but by the power of the Holy Ghoſt? And for what did I deſerve to experience them? The reaſon muſt be found in the riches of his own free grace.—Did the Father foreſee any thing good in me, for which he choſe me in his Son? Was it for any worthineſs of mine, that the Son vouchſafed to take fleſh, and to live and die for me? Was it for any foreſeen works, faithfulneſs, or diligence in means, that the Holy Ghoſt called me to know, to believe, and to enjoy the Father's love through the Son's ſalvation? O, no. Away with ſuch thoughts. I dare claim nothing for mine own, but ſin and ſhame. Not unto me, Lord, not unto me, but unto thee be all the glory. It was the good pleaſure of thine own will,

which choſe me before the foundation of the world, and accepted me in the beloved; and now I know that thy counſels of old are faithfulneſs and truth. I experience the happy fruit and effect of them. I am brought to believe in thee, and to love my God and Father, which I am ſatisfied I could never have done, if thy free love had not firſt purpoſed to ſave me, and now carried thy purpoſes into execution. To the praiſe of the glory of thy diſtinguiſhing grace, I am in poſſeſſion of the things which accompany ſalvation. O give me more grace, that I may daily make a better uſe of them, and may return thee better praiſe for thy free gifts of free grace.

It is free, and it is alſo COVENANT love. This is another of its divine properties: God commendeth his love towards the heirs of promiſe, by giving them full ſecurity for its unchangeableneſs. And this view the Holy Spirit opens to them for the ſupport of their faith in times of trial. When they are walking in darkneſs, and have no light, troubled on every ſide, without are fightings, within are fears, when in great heavineſs through failings in duty, through riſings of corruption, or through manifold temptations, then he diſcovers to them the treaſures of covenant love, and enables them to draw rich conſolation from that heavenly ſtorehouſe. An heir of promiſe under his teaching is often ſupported in this way—" It is true, I am in

trouble, but not forſaken. What if every thing I have and am in myſelf makes againſt me, yet God is on my ſide, a covenant God: for I believe the eternal Three entered into covenant before all worlds, and with manifold wiſdom ordered all things relating to the heirs of promiſe. For their ſakes, and to end all ſtrife in their conſciences about the certainty of their ſalvation, it pleaſed the bleſſed Trinity to enter into covenant, and to confirm their covenant by oath, thus giving them two immutable things to truſt in, in which it is impoſſible for God to lie. O, how ſtrengthening to faith is this view of the unchangeableneſs of covenant love! If it be but a man's covenant, being properly ſigned and ſealed, no one diſannulleth or addeth thereto. And who ſhall diſannul or add to the covenant of the Trinity? The creature cannot. God will not. His purpoſe of bringing many ſons to glory is unalterably fixed in his own mind, and in order to make it a ſure ground for their faith, he confirmed his immutable covenant by his immutable oath. On this ſecurity I reſt my ſoul. A covenant God has enabled me to truſt in his covenant engagements. Hence I ſee every thing relating to my ſalvation abſolutely certain in the counſel and covenant of God; and I look upon my faith to be one of the effects of my being in the covenant. And faith as a covenant gift is an immutable gift. What a bleſſing is it, that the gifts and calling of

God are without repentance! It has been given me on the behalf of Chriſt to believe. And is not this from covenant love? What elſe could bring me to truſt in covenant faithfulneſs? Therefore by believing I have immutable things to depend upon for the certainty of my ſalvation. Upon them would I ſtay my ſoul, as well as I may, and fix my heart upon them. O that I could bring more glory to my covenant God, by truſting him with unſhaken confidence! His love to me demands it at my hands. His love contrived the plan of ſalvation. Love provided every thing needful to carry it into execution. The evidence which he has given of this, was from the overflowings of love. His word of promiſe, ratified by covenant, confirmed by oath, the oath of the holy, bleſſed, and glorious Trinity, made to ſatisfy the heirs of promiſe of the immutability of the divine will concerning them—O what miracles of love are theſe! And all to aſſure them, that the heart of Jehovah is invariably towards them for good! Yes, Lord, this is the great love wherewith thou loveſt me. And this is the evidence of love. Thou haſt brought me to believe it, and to put ſome honor upon it. I deſire to truſt to thy covenant engagements without wavering. Eſtabliſh, ſtrengthen, ſettle my faith. Increaſe it from day to day, that I may grow in the knowledge and experience of that love which paſſeth knowledge. For,

It is a free covenant, and alſo an EVERLAST-

ING love. This is another of its moſt glorious properties. His love knows neither beginning nor end. It is without variableneſs, or ſhadow of turning. The heart of God is always one and the ſame towards his choſen people: for he loveth them freely. The motives to it were all in, and from his own breaſt. The covenant was diſtinguiſhing love, ſecured to the heirs of promiſe by the moſt ſolemn engagements. And this crowns all. His love is of the ſame date with the covenant---not only before all worlds, but alſo from eternity. Therefore it is frequently called in ſcripture an everlaſting covenant, and covenant-love is ſaid to be according to the eternal purpoſe, which he had purpoſed in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord: whereby, before the foundations of the world were laid, he hath conſtantly decreed by his counſel, ſecret to us, to deliver from curſe and damnation thoſe whom he hath choſen in Chriſt out of mankind, and to bring them by Chriſt to everlaſting ſalvation, as veſſels made to honor. Here is a never-failing ſource of comfort to a believing heart. Meditate, O my ſoul, upon it. Conſider, what God hath done for thee, and give him the glory of his precious love. Has he not called thee by his Spirit, working in thee in due ſeaſon? Haſt thou not obeyed the call? Doſt thou not depend upon the finiſhed work of God thy Saviour? Art thou not juſtified freely by faith in him? Art thou not ſeeking daily to mortify the works of the fleſh, and thy earthly mem-

bers, and that thy mind may be drawn up to high and heavenly things? Certainly these are good proofs of the purposes of the Father's love towards thee: because these are the happy effects of his purposes, now taking place in thy soul. O how greatly should this consideration establish and confirm thy faith of eternal salvation to be enjoyed by Christ, and thereby kindle thy love towards God. He has, indeed, drawn thee by the sweet attraction of his Spirit unto himself, and he has explained to thee the motive for his so doing---"Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." His love, discovered to thee in time, is the fruit of his love before time: for the one is the effect of the other. If love had not been always in his heart towards thee, thy heart could never have been drawn in love to him. But he has drawn it. And thou art seeking to have it drawn more closely to him. Is it not thy daily wish? O for more love to my gracious Father---what a love has he shewn to me---what a free, covenant, everlasting love! And yet, alas! what poor returns do I make him? Holy Spirit of love, raise and exalt my affections, and let the consideration of the wonderful love of my heavenly Father to me increase mine to him, and let mine abound yet more and more in knowledge, and in all sensible experience.

The Holy Spirit, who is the great teacher and manifester of the Father's love, has re-

vealed theſe properties of it in ſcripture, for the eſtabliſhment of the faith of the children of God. He would have them believe aſſuredly that God is their Father, not in name only, but in deed and in truth; that he has the bowels of the tendereſt parent, and that he freely, fully, everlaſtingly loves them in his dear Son. As he loves him, ſo he loves them. He embraces the head and the members with the ſame affection. And becauſe they can hardly believe this in times of trial and trouble, the Holy Spirit would ſatisfy their hearts of it, by diſcovering to them the unchangeableneſs of their Father's love, as it has been manifeſted in the divine covenant, and confirmed with the divine oath. In both which, the witneſs of the Father to his children is given in this manner---I have freely loved you, I have engaged to love you, and I will ever be mindful of my covenant engagements ---as I live, ſaith the Lord, I will love you unto the end---yea, I will bleſs you with all ſpiritual and eternal bleſſings in Chriſt Jeſus---what he, your elder brother, is now in glory, that will my love make you---the mountains ſhall depart, and the hills ſhall be removed, but my kindneſs ſhall not depart from you, neither ſhall the covenant of my peace be removed, ſaith the Lord, that hath mercy on you.

Theſe are faithful ſayings, and worthy of all acceptation. O evil heart of unbelief, what pretence haſt thou to reaſon againſt the truth.

of them? O ye of little faith, wherefore do ye doubt of receiving the goodneſs of them? Your Father is not a man, that he ſhould lie, neither the ſon of man, that he ſhould alter his purpoſe. Hath he ſaid, and ſhall he not do it? Or hath he ſpoken, and ſhall he not make it good? Yes, the purpoſe of his heart, ſpoken with his mouth, ſhall be made good with his arm: all his perfections ſtand engaged to eſtabliſh his faithful word, and therefore it is a ſafe ground to build and to reſt upon. Truſting to it, the believer may boldly claim the promiſed bleſſings of his Father's love; and with a hope that will never make him aſhamed, he may expect a growing enjoyment of its free covenant and eternal bleſſings.

Well then, O my ſoul, thou haſt conſidered the ſubject. What are thy ſentiments of the love of the Father? Are they ſuch as the ſcripture teaches? Take heed of error. A little miſtake here will have dreadful effects upon thy walk. Doſt thou believe, that thou, coming to the Father, through faith in the life and death of his co-equal Son, art pardoned and juſtified before him, and that this thy coming to the Father, through the Son, is from the grace of the Spirit? Therefore the Three that bear record in heaven, do witneſs to thy being an object of covenant love. Does this witneſs keep thy conſcience quiet, and thy heart happy? Canſt thou plead it againſt guilt and fear, and maintain the influence of it in dark and trying times? The love of thy heavenly Father

s immutable: doſt thou experience it to be ſo? It is everlaſting. Canſt thou depend upon it as ſuch? It has provided all bleſſings for thee in Jeſus: art thou receiving them out of his fulneſs, grace for grace? It is propoſed to thy faith in *John* xvii. and in *Eph.* iii. as a never-failing ſpring of conſolation. Read and try, whether thou art practically acquainted with what is there written. Examine the character of the Father's love; and be aſſured what is not agreeable to it, is not the teaching of the Holy Spirit. His office in thy ſoul is to witneſs to what he has revealed in the ſcripture, to explain it to thine underſtanding, to make it the ground of thy faith, and the enjoyment of thy heart. Doſt thou then underſtand, and believe, and enjoy the Father's love, according to what the Holy Spirit has teſtified of it?

Perhaps thou art clear in thine underſtanding, but through the weakneſs of thy faith haſt but little enjoyment of the love of God. Why is thy faith weak? Search into the cauſe (depend upon it, God is not the cauſe,) and having diſcovered it, inquire into the remedy. There is proviſion made in the covenant for all the infirmities of thy faith: for it was well ordered in all things and ſure, and thy faith was well ordered and ſure---infallible ſecurities were provided in the covenant to make it ſure. That thou ſhouldſt have it, that thou ſhouldſt keep it, and keep it too unto the end, the bleſſed Trinity have engaged, by their im-

mutable counſel, and their immutable oath. Therefore, thou art now kept by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation. The power of God, which is thy keeper, has given thee faith, and keeps thy faith, that it fail not. Thou and it are well kept. A covenant God has the charge of both. Almighty love watches over thee, and underneath are the everlaſting arms. Till theſe fail, thy faith cannot fail. O what powerful motives are theſe to induce thee to believe without wavering! Conſider them carefully. And may the Lord render them the means of ſtrengthening thy faith, and of thereby enabling thee to cleave more cloſely in love to thy heavenly Father.

It may be, thou art hindered from living by unſhaken faith, becauſe thou haſt ſo little love to God—he ought to have all thy heart and ſoul, and mind and ſtrength, but it grieves thee to obſerve what a ſmall part he has of them. This view is always humbling. Our love, at beſt, is not what it ought to be. It is not conſtant: it ebbs and flows. It is not perfect: the fleſh luſteth always contrary to the Spirit. It is not what God deſerves, as payment for love received: who will compute the full value of his love to one redeemed ſinner? On earth it ſurpaſſeth knowledge. In heaven it ſurpaſſeth all returns of praiſe. The higheſt love of glorified ſaints is only acknowledgement, but not payment. They are perfectly humble, and therefore willing that God ſhould have all the glory of their ſalvation.

To him they aſcribe it. The ſame mind in thee would refine thy love, and make it ſomething like their's. When thou art conſidering thy love to God, and aſhamed at the ſight of it, then look at his. Look eſpecially at his, when thine is little. Believing views of his will increaſe thine. Thine has nothing elſe to excite it, or to nouriſh it. Thou art not called upon to warm thyſelf with the ſparks of thy love to God, but with the pure conſtant flame of his love to thee. His is to keep up thine. His is the firſt cauſe, and thine is but the effect. The experience of his will heal all the infirmities of thine. When thy love is little, unſettled, cold, and dull, then ſtudy the divine properties of his: theſe rightly underſtood will increaſe, ſettle, warm, and actuate thine affections. By believing meditation thou wilt find a pardon provided for thy little love: the ſenſe of it will comfort thy conſcience. Thy heart will grow hot within thee: while thou art muſing, the fire will kindle. It will break out. Thou wilt ſpeak with thy tongue praiſe and thankſgiving to thy loving God and Father.

Thou art willing then, O my ſoul, and ready to ſet out to follow thy God. Under the influence of the Holy Spirit, thou haſt choſen him for thy portion, and in a conſtant dependence upon his grace, thou haſt taken his way for thy daily walk. How great is the love, wherewith he loveth thee! Survey it. Meaſure, if thou canſt, the dimenſions of it in thine

own particular caſe. The more thou art acquainted with it, the readier wilt thou be to give him all the glory of it, and to make ſuch acknowledgments as theſe:

I ſpeak the truth in Chriſt, I lie not, my conſcience bearing me witneſs in the Holy Ghoſt, that being juſtified by faith, I have found peace, and free acceſs to a reconciled God. We are agreed, and now I deſire to walk with him. He is my Father in Jeſus, and I know he has bowels of the tendereſt affection for me. I ought not, it would be baſe in me, to queſtion it, ſince he has ſhed his love abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghoſt: who has made me of one mind, of one heart, and of one way with himſelf. His way is become mine: for he has reconciled me to it, by cauſing me to ſee that he has choſen me freely, as an object of his electing love, that he gave his Son to finiſh ſalvation work for me, and that he has now given his Spirit to me, who has called me, and given me ears to hear, who has beſtowed on me faith and hope, and has enabled me to look upon theſe as fruits of the Father's covenant grace, and everlaſting favor. O what exceeding riches of love are theſe! If I would declare and ſpeak of them, they are more than can be numbered. What am I, that I ſhould be accepted in the beloved? His Father mine. He ſees me, loves me, yea, bleſſes me in him. My title is clear to all ſpiritual bleſſings, becauſe God, being my God in Jeſus, all things

are mine. He will make them all work together for my good. He that withheld not his own Son, but gave him for me, how ſhall he not with him freely give me all things? Having his free grant of them in the word of promiſe, and truſting to his faithfulneſs, I have ſet out to walk with my divine Friend and Father, hoping to enjoy his loving preſence all the way to heaven. I would not aim at getting any new title to his love, but to have new enjoyment. Every day I am ſeeking for more knowledge, and for more experience of his abundant love to me in his beloved Son. And for this end, I would walk cloſe with him in his way---not to buy his love, it is ineſtimable ---not to merit it, free grace and merit cannot ſtand together—not that I may deſerve it for my walk, but may freely receive it of him in my walk—not that he may give it me for walking with him, but that in walking with him, I may enjoy what he has already given me. His love is a free gift. I would by faith enjoy it in time, as I hope by ſenſe to enjoy it in eternity. Whatever bleſſing, ſtrength, victory, or comfort, I ſtand in need of, I look to the fulneſs which he has laid up in Jeſus, and from thence I receive it. I read my title to it, and I take poſſeſſion of it, for nothing done in me or by me, now or at any other time, but only in and for the free grace of his Father and my Father. While I can live thus by ſimple faith, I find I am enabled to go on well. The ſenſe of his free, covenant,

everlaſting love, keeps my heart happy, and makes walking with him my delight. O that he may enable me to preſs forward, that I may hold my confidence, and the rejoicing of hope, ſtedfaſt unto the end! And why need I doubt of it, ſince he has me in his keeping? His love has bound itſelf it to me by covenant engagements, which are my full ſecurity for what he has declared—"I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee."

Theſe deſires, I am perſuaded, are from thee, O Father of mercies. I could never have ſought my happineſs in thy love, unleſs thou hadſt firſt loved me. O grant me then the deſires of my heart. What thy good Spirit has put me upon ſeeking, let me by his grace find continually. He has manifeſted to me thy perfect reconciliation to thy people, through the life and death of Jeſus. It has been given me on his behalf to believe this. I have therefore taken thee for my God and my portion, and I would ſo walk with thee as to obtain a growing knowledge and experience of thy love. For this cauſe I bow my knees unto thee, Holy Father. O hear and anſwer the prayer of faith. Give me grace to walk with thee in love, all the way to glory. I aſk it in the name of Jeſus: for thou art the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named. One Father, one family, one love. Thou receiveſt all thy children, whether in heaven or earth, into the ſame near relation, and em-

braceſt them with the ſame dear affection in thy beloved Son. O what a mercy is this! Bleſſed, for ever bleſſed be thy fatherly love, which choſe me to be of thy family, and which has brought me to know that I am a child of God, by faith in Chriſt Jeſus. I thank thee for giving me the deſire to live as ſuch, and to walk worthy of my high calling. O grant me then, according to the riches of thy glory, (out of thine infinite treaſury of grace, and to the praiſe of the glory of thy grace) to be ſtrengthened with might by thy Spirit in the inner man. He is the promiſe of the Father. All thy children have their new birth, and every faculty of the new man from him, and by the working of his mighty power they are kept, as well as renewed, day by day: for without him they can do nothing. Of this he has thoroughly convinced me. I know I cannot call thee Father, nor believe in thee, nor love thee, but by thy Spirit. O my God, ſtrengthen me effectually by his grace in the inner man, for every purpoſe of ſpiritual life. Whatever he has engaged to do in thy children, let him do it in me, that through his preſence and power Chriſt may dwell in my heart by faith. O let him continually diſcover to me mine intereſt in Chriſt, and open to me the exceeding riches of thy love in him. Holy Father, let thy good Spirit abide with me, that I may know for certain Chriſt is one with me, and I am one with him, and may thereby be able to maintain conſtant fellowſhip

with him—he dwelling in me, and I in him. O may I thus live continually by the faith of the Son of God, depending always for acceptance with thee upon his atonement and his righteouſneſs, and ſo may find the happy fruit of his prayer to thee—"O righteous Father, I have declared to my diſciples thy name, and will declare it, that the love, wherewith thou loveſt me, may be in them, and I in them." Thou didſt hear, thou haſt anſwered times out of number, the requeſt of thy beloved Son. Lord God, anſwer it to me. Let me rejoice in thy love, and find it to be the ſame to me, as to him. Let thy good Spirit root me and ground me in the knowledge of thy love to me in Jeſus. O grant me to be deeply rooted in the experience of it, that my faith working by love, may bring forth much fruit to thy glory, and I may become ſo grounded in love, as to ſtand unſhaken, like a houſe built upon a rock, againſt every attack made upon my love to thee. O my God and Father, my heart is naked and open to thee. Thou knoweſt the ſecrets of it. Thou ſeeſt how fervently I pray for the abiding preſence of the Holy Spirit. My prayer comes from a feeling ſenſe of my want of him, and from a dependence on thy promiſe to give the Spirit to them that aſk him. Lord, I aſk. Grant me to be ſtrengthened by him, with every needful gift and grace in the inner man. Send him to manifeſt plainer and plainer my union with Jeſus,

in order to my keeping up communion with him: that having him dwelling in my heart by faith, I may be ſo eſtabliſhed in the experience of thy love to me in him, as to be able to comprehend with all ſaints, what is that breadth, and length, and depth, and height of thy love. All the ſaints comprehend it. But the ſaints below leſs than they above. And ſome of them below comprehend more than others. I know but little: O my God, increaſe my knowledge of thy love in Jeſus. Whereunto I have attained, eſtabliſh me; and keep me preſſing forward for clearer diſcoveries of it. Help me to ſurvey it, ſo far as faith is able, in its moſt glorious dimenſions, and to praiſe thee for mine experience of its rich mercies. Holy Father, teach me ſtill more by thy Spirit of the boundleſs freeneſs, and of the endleſs fulneſs of thy love---let me know thy love in Chriſt, which paſſeth knowledge. Although I cannot know it as it is, my limited underſtanding being incapable of meaſuring the infinity of thy love, yet for this very reaſon let me be daily ſtudying to know more of it---growing up into Chriſt Jeſus by faith—abounding in hope by the power of the Holy Ghoſt—and increaſing in the love of God. Holy, bleſſed, and glorious Trinity, let me thus partake of the fulneſs of grace below, grace for grace, till I partake of the fulneſs of glory above—that I may be filled with all the fulneſs which is of God, with which thou haſt promiſed to fill thy children in earth

and heaven. O magnify thy love towards me according to its greatneſs, and not according to my deſerts, or to my prayers. I know thou canſt do exceeding abundantly above all that I can aſk or think, according to the power that worketh effectually in me. Thy power engaged to act for me is the ſupport of my faith, and mine encouragement in my prayer. It is an infinite and almighty power, which has graciouſly begun, and has hitherto proſperouſly carried on the good work in my ſoul. To it all things are poſſible. Lord forbid I ſhould doubt of thy granting the petitions, which I have been offering up unto thee in thy Son's name. That which thou haſt promiſed, thou art able alſo to perform. O my God and Father, ſet thy power to work more effectually in me. Let the Spirit of might enlarge my thoughts of, and my faith in, thy precious love. Let me experience daily, how much more thou art able to do, than I have yet obtained; to give, than I have yet aſked; to increaſe, than I have yet thought. And whatever increaſe thou giveſt, may it draw out mine affections in greater love to thee, and to thy ways, and ſo be the means of bringing more glory to thee. For thy love in Jeſus, the whole family in heaven and earth is aſcribing honor and praiſe. Accept my thanks, holy Father, together with theirs. To thee be glory in the church by Chriſt Jeſus, throughout all ages, world without end. *Amen.*

CHAP. IV.

The believer goes on ſucceſsfully, while he walks by faith in a conſtant dependence upon his reconciled God, and loving Father.

THE leading principle upon which he ſets out is this. God is my God and Father. He is perfectly reconciled unto me, and my conſcience is at peace with him, through faith in his beloved Son. He loves me in him. He has manifeſted it plainly to me, and now my heart would cleave to him as my moſt tender parent. I would reſt in my love to him, as he reſts in his love to me. It is entirely through the grace of the eternal Spirit, that I have been enabled thus to believe in the finiſhed work of Jeſus, and to experience the Father's love in him. By which means I have been ſatisfied of the love of the ever-bleſſed Trinity to my ſoul. Father, Son, and Spirit, have covenanted to make me an heir of God, and a joint heir with Chriſt: from my belief and experience of theſe truths, I have been enabled to chooſe God for my portion. His will is become mine. His appointed way is my courſe; and now I deſire to walk with him, as to maintain in my conſcience the peace of God, and in my heart the love of God. I do not expect any new title to theſe ineſtimable graces. My claim is good and valid under Chriſt. I would not diſparage it, by ſuppoſing that my

cloſe walk with God was to make any atonement for my ſins, or to be the leaſt part of my juſtifying righteouſneſs. I have theſe already, and perfectly too in Jeſus. The enjoyment of them is the thing I want. I am ſeeking for more of that peace with, and love to, the Father, to which I am entitled in his Son. His fulneſs, the fulneſs of him that filleth all in all, is mine. A free grant of it has paſſed in the court of heaven, has been revealed in the record of truth, and I, by believing, have accepted the grant. I am in poſſeſſion of its privileges, and am enjoying its bleſſings. On the fulneſs of Jeſus I live this day. Out of it I hope to be receiving every grace, which I ſhall want for my ſafe and happy walk with his Father, and my Father. Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul, for what thou knoweſt and haſt experienced of his abundant grace: which has enabled thee thus to walk with thy reconciled God and loving Father. This day thou art called upon to maintain peace with him in thy conſcience, and love to him in thy heart; peace like his, flowing from the ſenſe of his being perfectly reconciled to thee—love like his, the happy fruit of his unchangeable love to thee. Whatever thou meeteſt with in thy work or warfare, ought not to leſſen, but ought to exerciſe and to improve thoſe graces. Never forget that he is thy God—the God of peace. He ſtands related to thee in the deareſt and moſt indiſſoluble bond of love. He is thy Father in Jeſus. Keep the ſenſe of this always

freſh upon thy mind, and thy ſteps will be ordered aright. Nothing will be able to ſtop thee in the way to heaven, or to ſeduce thee out of it; but every thing will bring thee forward. Whilſt thou canſt maintain peace and love, thou wilt go on proſperouſly againſt guilt and ſelf-righteouſneſs, againſt the wiles and aſſaults of thy ſpiritual foes, againſt the world which lieth in wickedneſs, and againſt every inward and outward trial. The Lord being on thy ſide, all theſe ſhall work together under him for thy good, and they ſhall be the means of making thee walk ſafely in the way, and of bringing thee happily to the end of it. The apoſtle has given us the whole plan in few words —"WE WALK," ſays he, "BY FAITH, and not by ſight." We direct our chriſtian courſe by believing, and not by ſeeing. Faith is to us the evidence of things not ſeen, and the ground of our hoping to enjoy them. We believe upon the authority of God's word, that they are what he deſcribes them to be: for faith, as a grace of the Spirit, conſiſts in giving credit to what God ſays. If it be a truth propoſed to the underſtanding, faith relies upon the infallible word. If it be a promiſe, faith depends upon the arm of God to make it good. And whatever he has promiſed, faith (when it is as it ſhould be) does not ſtagger at difficulties, but reſts fully perſuaded, that what God hath promiſed, he is able alſo to perform. Faith looks at the word ſpoken, and overlooks ſeeming impoſſibilities: THUS SAITH THE

LORD---that is enough for faith---full of ſatisfying evidence: for it knows, that to ſpeak and to do are the ſame thing with an unchangeable God.

How many errors in judgment, and conſequent miſtakes in practice, prevail at this day, chiefly ariſing from confounding faith with its fruits; and from not diſtinguiſhing between the word of God believed, and what will follow upon believing it aright. Thus ſome make aſſurance to be of the eſſence of faith, others make appropriation, and many make it conſiſt in an impreſſion upon the mind, that Chriſt loved me, and gave himſelf for me. Theſe are fruits: what faith ſhould produce, but not what it is. Theſe are effects of faith working, and not definitions of the nature of faith. A believer ſhould be exhorted to make his calling and election ſure: for it is his privilege. He ought to give all diligence to attain aſſurance, to appropriate Chriſt with all his bleſſings to himſelf, and to be clearly perſuaded that Chriſt loved him, and gave himſelf for him. Theſe are bleſſed fruits of believing. May God give his people more of them. But then the tree muſt be before the fruits, and the fruits grow upon the tree. Faith is firſt, and faith derives its being from believing the word of God, and all its fruits are continued acts of believing. And when you hear of believing, do you not always think of ſomething ſpoken? You cannot ſeparate theſe two in your mind.

Something has been ſaid and propoſed to you before your belief can be called for. If nothing has been ſaid, belief has no exerciſe. Faith and the word of God, therefore, are related, as the effect and the cauſe: becauſe faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. What God hath ſpoken in his word demands belief from all that hear it. When faith cometh by hearing it, then we aſſent to the truth of what God has ſaid, and we rely upon his faithfulneſs to make good what he has promiſed. Aſſurance is this faith grown to its full ſtature: but we are not born ſix feet high. Appropriation is a very comfortable acting of faith, when a man is perſuaded of his intereſt in covenant mercies: and, from what he then feels, can ſay, Chriſt loved me, and gave himſelf for me; but he has not this comfort in times of heavineſs; he may be walking in darkneſs and having no light; yea, in the hidings of the Lord's countenance, and yet even then he may truſt ſimply to what God hath ſpoken; which is true faith, and more exalted faith, than that which draws its evidence from its appropriating acts and its preſent experience. The more a man truſts to ſenſe, the leſs he lives by faith: for ſenſible feelings are not faith. Impreſſions are not believing. I ſee the ſun; I hear a ſound; I feel an object: faith has no place in theſe inſtances. Its eſſence is believing and truſting what God hath ſpoken. If his word be believed, and by believing, the conſcience

find peace, and the heart joy: theſe are joy and peace IN believing. They come from believing; are its effects; and no more enter into the eſſence of faith, than comfortable feelings do into the eſſence of a man. He is as truly a man, when miſerable, as he is when comfortable.

Theſe miſtakes ſhould be carefully guarded againſt, becauſe they are chiefly pernicious to the children of God; who are kept by them from growing up into aſſurance, into appropriation, and into the ſenſible experience of God's love to them in Chriſt Jeſus. They are puzzled —they are miſled, by being told that they have no faith, if they have no aſſurance, &c. They examine themſelves, but cannot find any ſuch faith. This diſcourages them. They are tempted to think they have no true faith, becauſe they have not what certain perſons talk of. But if they would adhere ſtrictly to the word of God, and would take their ideas from it, they would ſee how ſimple and plain a thing believing is, and would ſoon be ſatisfied that they were true believers. Which conviction would have many bleſſed effects, eſpecially theſe—it would put them upon ſeeking for an increaſe of faith, and upon expecting the proper fruits of faith. What nouriſhes faith, ripens them: for they cannot be produced ſo long as perſons are doubtful whether they have any faith at all. They would ſee how deſirable it is to believe without doubt or wavering, what honour it puts upon God's

word, what comfort it brings to them. And they would be waiting in the appointed means for grace to maintain, for grace to improve their faith, that they may be going on from faith to faith. While this was their end and aim, faith in act and exerciſe, maintained and improved, would bring in daily growing evidence of their being indeed partakers of the faith of God's elect. Living by faith, walking by faith, would demonſtrate to them their ſpiritual life and walk, as plainly as natural life and walk can be demonſtrated by any outward actions.

Here is great need, O my ſoul, to read the ſcripture, and to pray for the Spirit of wiſdom. Read, pray much, leſt thou ſhouldeſt err concerning the faith. Every error will be a ſtumbling block in the way of thy holy walk, and make thee tired of it, or ſeduce thee out of it. Let it be one of thy daily petitions, Lord, ſave me from all miſtakes concerning the faith of the Goſpel; and let the word of God, by which faith cometh and groweth, be thy daily ſtudy. This thy preſent buſineſs. Now ſet out, truſting to what God hath ſpoken, and relying on what he hath promiſed. On this principle proceed, as it is laid down by the apoſtle, *Col.* ii. 6. "As ye have therefore received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him." He is expreſſing his joy at his beholding their order, and the ſtedfaſtneſs of their faith in Chriſt, and he would teach them how to maintain their faith throughout their chriſ-

tian courſe. How did you receive Chriſt at firſt? Was it not by believing? Receiving Chriſt and believing in him are, in *John* i. 12. ſuppoſed to mean the ſame thing. And in *John* xvii. 20, 21, our Lord ſays---" That they who believe in him through the word, are one with him. Chriſt then is received by faith, and by the ſame faith, by the belief of the ſame word of God, we walk in him, ſo as to be rooted and grounded and eſtabliſhed in the faith. Our walk is in him, not any thing diſtant from him; but is the effect of union with him. By him we live, *in* him we walk ---rooted in him, we grow, as a branch in the vine---built up in him, we are fixed as a building on a ſure foundation, and thereby we become eſtabliſhed and ſtrengthened in the faith. Every ſtep we take is by faith, by the ſame faith wherewith Chriſt was received. He muſt be received always, as he was received once. There is no change of object, and there muſt be no change of faith, but the ſame continued truſt on his word, and the ſame dependence on his promiſed ſtrength. We never ſet out to walk with a reconciled God, till we are one with Chriſt by faith, and know our union with him, and our walk is in conſequence of this. If we go on at all, it is by communion with him. We can receive only out of his fulneſs, grace for grace, to make us willing and able to go forward. Our fellowſhip with him is in every part and in every moment of our walk, and this is as neceſſary

as our fellowſhip with the air and elements of this world is to every thing that concerns our natural walk. Our wiſdom to guide our ſteps, our progreſs in the way, our courage and ſtrength, our warfare and victory, every grace and every bleſſing is received by faith, and is the effect of our communion with Jehovah Jeſus. We truſt in his word, we rely on his arm, we wait on his faithfulneſs, and ſo go forward; for he makes good what he had promiſed to give us in our walk, which confirms the peace of God, eſtabliſhes our hearts in the love of God, increaſes our faith, and thereby makes our daily walk more comfortable to us, and more glorious to him.

But if faith conſiſt in believing and truſting the word of God, it may be inquired, how ſhall we know the difference between true and falſe, between dead and living faith. It may be known from the cauſe. The fruit of the Spirit is faith. He produces it. It is his gift, beſtowed by his operation, continued by his power, increaſed by his bleſſing, and carried on to the end, by his never leaving nor forſaking his own work. And he makes it known to be his. He gives eyes to ſee it, and hearts to acknowledge it. Therefore the apoſtle ſays of them who have received the Spirit of God, that they KNOW the things which are freely given to them of God; by faith they both know the reality, and alſo taſte the ſweetneſs of thoſe free gifts of free grace.

It may be known from the effects. Dead faith brings forth nothing. Living faith is fruitful. It produces a hearty truſt in the truth of what God hath ſpoken, and a quiet reliance on the faithfulneſs of what God hath promiſed. It gives him credit for the finiſhed ſalvation of his Son, and puts honour upon his record concerning it; whereby peace is received into the conſcience, and love into the heart. Upon which there follows a ſettled dependence upon this reconciled God, and loving Father, for the fulfilling of every promiſe, and this is improved by daily experience. He that truſteth in the Lord is never confounded. God is faithful. His promiſes cannot fail. Bleſſed is the man that truſteth in him. The Lord God will be a ſun and ſhield unto him: the Lord will give him grace and glory.

As for the hypocrites, it is not ſo with them. The Holy Spirit was not the author of their faith. It was a fancy of their own, formed in their heads without any warrant from God. There was no life in it, and no living effects from it. There was the form, and nothing more. They made a profeſſion, but never came to any enjoyment. They had no vital union, and therefore they could not have any real communion with Chriſt. They could not, as the apoſtle expreſſes it, walk IN him, and therefore in the hour of temptation they fell away, and came to nothing. Take heed then, O my ſoul, of

miſtakes. Examine carefully of what ſort thy faith is. Bring it to the ſtandard of ſcripture; and ſee what went before believing---ſee whether thou doſt now from thy heart believe what God hath ſpoken---wait for the effects. Doſt thou ſo truſt his word, as to take him for thy God and thy portion? Art thou walking with him? And art thou depending on him to beſtow the promiſed graces and bleſſings on thee in thy walk? If this be thine experience; thou art ſet out well; go on. Remember where every thing relating to thy walk is to be had. The Father's love has laid it up all in the Son's fulneſs, and it is the office of the holy Spirit to teach thee how to receive out of it grace for grace. He teaches by his word. With this in thy hand, and his light in thine underſtanding, read and ſtudy what he has promiſed thee for thy ſafe, happy, and holy walk. Take no ſtep without the direction of his word, and expect at every ſtep that he will make good to thee what he has promiſed. Thou wilt very ſoon find the neceſſity of this dependence upon him: for ere thou haſt well begun thy walk, thou wilt be called upon to exerciſe thy faith, and to put it to trial. Thou wilt meet with many things in thee averſe to this holy walk; and many more to diſtreſs thee in it. The body of ſin, the old man, the fleſh, with all its affections and luſts, are ſtill in thee. It is of their nature to be luſting, and to be always putting forth ſome of

their filthy motions, in order to draw thee to walk after the fleſh, and not after the Spirit. The tempter helps them all he can. He knows how to improve them to his own intereſt: and if from what is paſſing within thee, there be a ſight and ſenſe of ſin, then if he can get thee to look at it in his view, he will act upon thy legal and ſelf-righteous tempers, and will inject ſuch vile inſinuations as theſe againſt the Lord and againſt his Chriſt—

How is it that I am yet the ſubject of ſin? It is ſtill in me. It cleaves to me, as the fleſh to my bones, and it mixes ſo with my duties, that I cannot perform them without it. I ſometimes fear I am nothing but ſin. When I attempt to walk with God, ere I ſet out, ſomething evil ariſes within me, and ſtops me. Some proud, unbelieving thought, ſome ſenſual affection, ſome worldly diſpoſition, ſome corruption or other is ever at hand to hinder my courſe. What then muſt I think of myſelf? I ſcarce know what. Things, I ſee, do not grow better. I have been long hoping for it; but I find there ſtill dwelleth no good thing in me: ſo that I am almoſt ready to queſtion the truth of my grace, and it is with great difficulty I can keep up any peace in my conſcience.

When the believer is attacked in this manner, (and who is not at ſome time or other) how is he to defend himſelf? Will his ſkilfulneſs in the word of righteouſneſs,

and his faith in the word of reconciliation, keep him ſafe in the hour of temptation? Yes. By the grace of the Holy Spirit, the leſſons before learnt will be enforced, and brought into uſe. This is the time to maintain faith in the atonement, and in the righteouſneſs of the God-man. Now it is to be tried in the fire; and it is put to the trial, that it may come out of it, like gold, proved to be ſterling metal, and refined from its droſs—better in every reſpect for having gone through the fire. The trial of faith is far more precious than that of gold which periſheth. It is therefore put into the furnace, that the believer may know the truth of it, and may experience the bleſſings of it. Faith conflicting with unbelief is a good fight—ſometimes ſharp; but always profitable. The fleſh may be weak and ready to yield, faith may be hard put to it, but victory is certain. During the battle the warrior is invincible in the whole armour of God. He takes to him the ſhield of faith, and holds it up againſt the fiery darts of ſatan. He draws out the ſword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and with it he defeats ſatan. He conſults or remembers a ſcripture ſuitable to his preſent caſe, and this being ſet home by the Holy Spirit puts an end to the engagement, and reſtores and ſettles ſweet peace in the conſcience. How often has he applied the following paſſage, which the Lord ſpeaks concerning his true Iſraelites, *Jer.* xxxii. 38,

39, 40, 41. "They SHALL be my people, and I WILL be their God, and I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me FOR EVER, for the good of them, and of their children after them, and I will make an everlasting covenant for them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear into their hearts that they shall not depart from me; yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good."

What strong consolation is there in this scripture? Every sentence has an argument in it, tending to establish peace with God, and to maintain it in the midst of war. How quieting and satisfying to the troubled conscience is his covenant purpose? "They SHALL be my people, and I WILL be their God." They shall, because I will. My will shall make them willing. And in the day of my power, when my purpose takes place, I will give them one heart, turned to myself, and one way, to walk with me by faith, as obedient children with their loving Father. This I will do for them that they may fear me FOR EVER, that the fear of offending me may rule always and by all means in their hearts.

O what promises are these! What can weak faith require farther to silence its doubts? How great is the goodness of God to his children, who knowing their frame, and whereof they are made, for the good of

them, and of their children after them, has laid ſuch a foundation for their faith, that they may build on it and not be afraid, yea, ſtanding on it, that they may fight the good fight of faith, aſſured of victory.

I will make, ſays their God, an everlaſting covenant for them, a covenant ordered in all things, and ſure by the counſel and oath of the bleſſed Trinity, the two immutable things, in which it is impoſſible God ſhould lie: the mountains ſhall depart and the hills ſhall be relieved, but my kindneſs ſhall not depart from them, neither ſhall the covenant of my peace be removed, ſaith the Lord, that hath mercy on them. My covenant was made for them, and ſhall be made good to them. As I live, ſaith the Lord, I will not turn away from them to do them good. I will never change my purpoſe, nor alter the word that is gone out of my mouth. I mean nothing but good to them. My heart is fixed upon it. And I will not leave the event to them. They ſhall not have the management of my purpoſes, nor have any power to defeat them. My will to do them good ſhall not depend on their will, or on their faithfulneſs, or on any thing in themſelves. I have taken all their concerns into mine own hands, and I will conduct them all to the praiſe of the glory of mine own grace. I will put my fear into their hearts, that they ſhall not depart from me—they SHALL not depart from me. They are not the cauſe of

their not departing, but I am. I have taken it upon myſelf. I will give them grace to walk cloſe with me, and to fear me always. I have covenanted for all, the means as well as the end, and I will keep them by my almighty power, till they receive the end of their faith, even the ſalvation of their ſouls. "Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good." This confirms all the reſt. His purpoſe of doing them good, his executing it, his continuing it, his increaſing it through time and through eternity, is a matter of rejoicing to the Lord God. He delights in it. It always was, and always will be the joy of his heart, his crown and glory. He will not, he cannot be deprived of his joy. Conſider this, thou poor diſtreſſed ſoul, who art in heavineſs through manifold temptations, and ready to faint through the weakneſs of thy faith. Take courage. Thy ſalvation is ſafe. Thy Father, who is in heaven, rejoices in it: he will ſave: he will rejoice over thee with joy, he will reſt in his love; he will joy over thee with ſinging. And his joy too ſhall be thine. As ſure as God is in Zion, thou ſhalt return and come to Zion with ſongs, and everlaſting joy upon thy head; thou ſhalt obtain joy and gladneſs, and ſorrow and ſighing ſhall flee away for ever.

O what a diſcovery is here of the ever-loving heart of our heavenly Father! What more could he promiſe in order to put an end to all ſtrife in the conſciences of his af-

flicted children! He has engaged in a covenant of peace to do good, nothing but good, to them. He has undertaken the whole of the covenant—what was to be done in them, as well as for them—to work out, to apply, and to ſecure their ſalvation. It is his unchangeable purpoſe, not to depart from them, and not to ſuffer them to depart from him, but he will rejoice in doing them good, and that for ever. The ſcripture, when underſtood and applied by the Holy Spirit, is received as full evidence of the unchangeable love of God to his children, and then it quiets their troubled mind. They can believe God to be their God ſtill in an unchangeable covenant, and they become ſatisfied that he has made them, and will keep them his people for ever. When they can thus mix faith with the promiſe, it then becomes the means of their reſting on the faithful arm of God in the hour of temptation, and of their finding him ſtill a God of peace: whereby peace is eſtabliſhed in their conſciences, and multiplied in their hearts. They learn to put more truſt in him, as their perfectly reconciled Father, and to approach him with more holy filial confidence. The trial of their faith, ſharp as it was, yet has done them great good. It has proved their peace, and has confirmed it. They now know well that it is the peace of God; and they have been taught how to maintain it. War makes good ſoldiers. The trials of

their grace are for the improvement of grace. Their peace has been therefore ſhaken, like a new planted tree, that it may take deeper and faſter root. Being thus ſtrengthened in the faith, and having the peace of God ruling in their hearts, they can meditate upon this ſcripture, and turn it into a ſubject of prayer and praiſe——

O gracious God and Father, pardon my thoughts of thy love to me in Jeſus. I was tempted, and ready to give way to unbelief: but the gracious proviſion made in thy word was the means of keeping me in the hour of temptation. O my God, make the word, in which thou haſt cauſed me to put my truſt, more precious to my ſoul. Open ſtill more to me the fulneſs of it, and put me into happier poſſeſſion of its promiſed bleſſings. I praiſe thee, I worſhip thee, for revealing this promiſe by thy Spirit, and for applying it by his grace with comfort to my heart. I now ſet to my ſeal that it is true. It is a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation. Glory be to thee that I accept it, and enjoy the good promiſed in it. O Father of mercies, what am I that I ſhould be made one of thy people, and ſhould have thee for my God? This love paſſeth knowledge. O help me to underſtand more, give me to find more of thy covenant love. Make my heart one with thee. Lead me in thy one way, that I may fear thee for ever. And when temptations come, ſuch as I have been in,

grant that they may bring me nearer to thee, and may be the means of my making much uſe of what thou haſt provided for me in thy Son's fulneſs. O let thy good Spirit abide with me to eſtabliſh my faith in thine everlaſting covenant, that I may believe thou wilt never turn from me to do me good. Merciful God, grant me this grace in every hour of need. Thou haſt given me thy word for it, and therein thou haſt enabled me to put my truſt. On thy faithful promiſe I would depend, and on nothing in myſelf. Thou haſt ſhewed me ſomething of my heart, and I feel it is revolting and ready always to rebel againſt God; but thou haſt undertaken to put thy fear into it, that it ſhall not depart from thee: therefore into thy faithful hands I commit it. Keep me, my God, by thy mighty power, through faith unto ſalvation. *Amen. Amen.*

Happy trials! which have ſo good an iſſue, and bring forth ſuch peaceable fruits. My brethren, account it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations, if they lead to the exerciſe of grace, and occaſion fervent effectual prayer. The believer, thus tried, learns by practice the neceſſity of being at peace with God, and of maintaining it in order to walk with God. He is put upon ſtudying the nature of this peace. He reads and meditates upon the revealed account of it. He ſees it is a perfect unchangeable peace, ſecured to him by the everlaſting covenant of the bleſſed

Trinity, who have engaged to ſave him from all his ſins and miſeries, and never to turn away from doing him good. To this he truſts. He commits himſelf to the care of this covenant God; and he finds the promiſe true. In temptation he believes, and is delivered. In his warfare out of weakneſs he is made ſtrong. He fights the good fight of faith, and he conquers all his enemies. He learns from trials to truſt with more confidence. He not only maintains, but alſo improves peace with God. He depends on what God has promiſed to them, who walk with him, and the promiſe is made good, and he learns to go on more comfortably, and daily walks cloſer with his heavenly Father.

The enemy looks on him with malice. He envies his ſtate. He once knew the heaven of communion with God, but he was lifted up with pride, and fell. It ſtirs up every infernal temper in him to ſee the happy believer, who had fallen like him, reſtored to what he can never expect. Hence either as a ſly ſerpent, or as a roaring lion, he never ceaſes to tempt. As ſoon as one wile fails, he has another ready. He is night and day plotting and ſcheming, waiting for an opportunity to make a ſeaſonable attack. While conſcience is at peace with God, and lives under the protection of the blood of ſprinkling, he tempts in vain. But he does not deſpair of ſucceſs. He knows he has an ally within us in faſt league with ſin, and therefore he ſtill hopes to draw him into ſin by

ſurprize and aſſault. In which he is indefatigable. He is never tired. He is always tempting the believer, not ſo much to groſs offences, as to ſpiritual wickedneſs. Sly injections, legal inſinuations, and ſelf-righteous thoughts, are his moſt common temptations. With theſe he tries to ſhake the peace of conſcience, and he forms his attack generally in this manner:

How can you be a child of God, and yet be as you are? There is nothing in you, for which God ſhould look upon you, and love you. What have you? What ceaſing from evil, what learning to do well, to recommend you to him? How can God love any thing, unleſs it be agreeable to his will, and what can he delight in, unleſs it be conformable to his image? But do you live up to his will, and is his image perfectly renewed in you? Have you grace, and do you live up to it? Are you a chriſtian, and are you like Chriſt? How are your duties? Juſt as they ſhould be? You know they are not, and how can God be pleaſed with them, when you are not pleaſed with them yourſelf? How is your walk? Is it ſuch as becometh your high calling—cloſe with God, and at a vaſt diſtance from ſin and the world? How is your warfare? Is the whole armour of God kept buckled on? And are you always, in the ſtrength of the Lord, a conqueror? Examine, and try yourſelf. Bring forth that one good thing, for which God ſhould love you, and beſtow his bleſſing upon

you. You have no ſuch thing. You have nothing to merit, yea, nothing to recommend you to the divine: and, therefore, is it not great preſumption to fancy, that God will love ſuch a one as you, whoſe juſt deſert is wrath and everlaſting deſtruction?

Theſe are ſome of the depths of ſatan. He knows how ſtrongly we are by nature attached to the covenant of works, and that if he can get the believer to look off from Jeſus, expecting to ſee ſomething in himſelf, for which God ſhould love him, he ſhall then weaken his faith and ſhake his peace. In this ſnare he has catched many a child of God. The temptation is ſuitable to the workings of our legal minds: it flatters our ſelf-righteous hopes: and is vaſtly pleaſing to the pride of our carnal hearts. No wonder then, ſo long as there is fleſh in us as well as ſpirit, this artful ſuggeſtion ſhould be ſometimes received in this manner—Have I any thing for which God ſhould eſteem me and bleſs me? I wiſh I could diſcover ſome amiable temper, or ſome praiſe-worthy deed, which might recommend me to the particular regard of God. Indeed, at preſent, I have not any ſuch. But I hope to attain it ſome time or other. If I do but uſe more diligence and watchfulneſs, and wait more conſtantly in the means of grace, perhaps I may attain it ſoon. However, there can be no harm in trying. I will exert myſelf. And I hope the day will come, when I ſhall be ſome way deſerving of the divine favour.

Here the temptation has taken place. As the ſerpent beguiled Eve through his ſubtlety, ſo is this man's mind corrupted from the ſimplicity that is in Chriſt. The ſubtle ſerpent has attacked the liberty of the child of God, and has darkened his underſtanding, and obſcured his view of goſpel grace. His eye is not now ſingle: his heart is not now ſimple in the finiſhed ſalvation. He has been deceived into a legal dependence, and is giving way to a ſpirit of bondage. If he was left to himſelf, the enemy would lead him captive at his will. Satan deſires to have him, that he may ſift him as wheat, but he is not ſuffered to blow any thing away, except a little chaff: for the Holy Spirit, in whoſe keeping he is, diſcovers and defeats the attempts of ſatan. He brings to his mind, and enables him to make uſe of what he before knew of the doctrines of grace. The preſent trial requires the practice, and affords occaſion for the improvement of his former leſſons. He had learnt from ſcripture, truths very different from the ſuggeſtions to which he was ready to yield. He was therein taught, that the Father's love to his children does not ſuppoſe merit in them. Grace does not follow works: for then grace would be no more grace. Election is not of him that willeth, or of him that runneth, but of God who ſheweth mercy. For we are ſaved freely by grace through faith, and that not of ourſelves; it is the gift of God. The election of grace is

from mere love and ſovereign favour; and has no motives to influence it but the good pleaſure of the divine will. The objects of it are not the worthy, but the unworthy---not innocent, but fallen man---ſinners, as ſuch, no way conditioned or qualified—the loſt, the helpleſs, the ungodly---yea, the chief of ſinners---open enemies and rebels againſt God. They are not ſaved by works of righteouſneſs, which they have done, or can do, leaſt any of them ſhould boaſt: for boaſting is abſolutely excluded. Salvation was ſo contrived, was ſo wrought out, and is ſo applied, that he who glorieth ſhall have nothing left him to glory in, but the Lord. No fleſh can glory in his preſence: for of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever. *Amen.*

So ſoon as the Spirit of God opens this view of the exceeding riches of divine grace, the believer ſees his miſtake. He finds that he was departing from the ſimplicity of the goſpel, by ſuppoſing that the love of God followed merit, and that he ſhould be loved more according as his walk recommended him. His eyes are opened. The deluſion vaniſhes. The perfect freeneſs, and the abſolute ſovereignty of the Father's love, as revealed in ſcripture, is manifeſted to him. He reads, and mixes faith with what he reads, and ſo recovers himſelf out of the ſnare of the devil. Some ſuch paſſage as this is made the means of his deliverance, *Pſ.* ciii. 17. "The

mercy of the Lord is from everlaſting to everlaſting upon them that fear him." Precious words! full of rich conſolation to thoſe, who have been tempted to ſeek ſome qualifications in themſelves, on account of which they might be entitled to the love of God, and who have been diſtreſſed upon their not finding it. The Holy Spirit teaches ſuch perſons to look out of themſelves, to an object exactly ſuitable to their caſe. He directs them to the divine mercy---a never-failing ſpring of comfort---to that mercy, which reacheth from eternity to eternity---and which confers its richeſt favours, not for the worthineſs of the receiver, but to the praiſe of the grace of the giver. Here he would have them fix their eyes, and expect relief to their hearts. Out of the fulneſs of mercy they may always receive grace for grace; for the mercy of the Lord is from everlaſting to everlaſting upon them that fear him. Every word is weighty. Meditate upon it, O my ſoul; and may the conſideration of each, lead thee to exalt that mercy of God, which is over all his works.

JEHOVAH is the word here rendered Lord. It is the incommunicable name, expreſſive of the incommunicable nature of the Godhead. It ſignifies the peculiar manner of the divine exiſtence, which is in, and of itſelf, underived, and independent. O how happy is it for thee, that there is mercy in the ſelf-exiſtent Godhead, and that every perfection in it will be for ever exalted, even juſtice itſelf, for the

exercise of mercy. May the Holy Spirit teach thee more of its nature, and make thee daily more acquainted in thine experience with its free grace and free gifts.

MERCY is that perfection in Jehovah, which disposes him to save miserable sinners: not a blind mercy, such as infidels dream of--but consistent with the honour of his law, and exercised to the glory of its holy precepts and of its just sanctions: therefore mercy and truth are so often mentioned together in scripture. God will not shew any mercy to sinners, but such as tends to establish his truth. Not one of his words can be broken, nor can one tittle of them ever fail. He will be justified in all his sayings, and clear when he is judged. He will be true and just, whenever he is merciful: his mercies being all covenant mercies, and all given in, and through Christ Jesus. All men are by nature children of wrath, and only they, who are chosen and called in Christ Jesus, are saved from wrath. These are vessels of mercy. His mercy is to them the love of a tender parent to his miserable children. He pities them, and determines to save them from their sins; in due time he quickens them, gives them eyes to see, and hearts to believe his love to them in Jesus, as the apostle witnesses--"God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he love us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ."

But for what reason, and upon what ac-

count, is he merciful to them? His mercy has no motive, but his own will. The objects of his mercy are corrupt fallen creatures, deſerving his wrath, even as others; and therefore he does not deal with them upon the footing of deſert. If he ſhewed them mercy for any foreſeen works of theirs, becauſe he knew they would repent and believe the goſpel, and walk worthy of it, mercy would then be turned into juſtice, and would loſe both its name and its nature. Whereas he ſaith unto Moſes, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compaſſion on whom I will have compaſſion. It is from mine own freedom and ſovereignty, that I have mercy on any ſinners. The cauſe is in myſelf, and not in them. I have compaſſion, on whom I will. It is from mine own mere love, that I have determined to be gracious to them; and my love has determined to ſave them, and the way alſo in which I will ſave them. I have appointed the end, and the means at the ſame time. Of mine own motion and good will I have reſolved to give my Son for them, and my Spirit to them, that they may repent and believe the goſpel, and walk worthy of it, and ſo I may bring them through my tender mercies to eternal ſalvation. If this was not the caſe, how could the deſcription be true, that mercy is FROM EVERLASTING TO EVERLASTING. The mercy of God knows no variableneſs, nor ſhadow of turning. It is

always the ſame. His fatherly heart ever entertained thoughts of mercy towards them: for when he ſhews them mercy, it is ſaid to be according to the eternal purpoſe, which he had purpoſed in Chriſt Jeſus—not for their merits, but for his mercies ſake—not for what they have any claim to, but for his own name's ſake. He gives all from mercy, and he would have all the glory returned to the mercy of the giver. What he gives, that he continues, and according to covenant engagements. Covenant mercies are ſure mercies. "I will make on everlaſting covenant for you, ſays he, even the ſure mercies of the beloved." They have already been made ſure to him. He is now in full poſſeſſion of every promiſed mercy. And he has received them, not as a private perſon, but as the head of the body, the church. He keeps them for the uſe of his church-members. And as ſure as the crown is upon his head, ſo ſurely will it be upon every one of their heads: for they are in the ſame covenant with him, whoſe ſure mercies reach from eternity to eternity. O what a view is here open to the eye of faith! Mercy always purpoſing, and in due time beſtowing its free bleſſings upon ſinners—mercy, without beginning, and without ending. The holy Spirit often calls upon us to behold it in this light: for he has not celebrated any of its divine properties, ſo much as this. It is frequently the noble ſubject of thankſgiving

in the Pſalmiſt's hymns. He has dedicated the 136th entirely to the praiſe of mercy; and going through the works of nature, providence, and grace, he aſcribes them one by one to that mercy, which endureth for ever. O happy, thrice happy objects of it! What was in the heart of the Father of mercies towards you from everlaſting will be ſo to everlaſting. His ſure mercies are yours. His compaſſions towards you fail not. Whatever you want for your ſucceſsful walk, he has promiſed to give you. Be not diſcouraged then. He will ſupply all your wants, not for your ſakes, but for his mercies ſake. Are you ſenſible of your unworthineſs? That's well. Mercy is for ſuch. It can have no glory, but from ſuch as you. Truſt it, and be aſſured you will find, that it endureth for ever and ever.

If a doubt ſhould ariſe in your mind—it is true, mercy in God cannot fail, but the exerciſe of it towards me may fail: I may ſo walk as to deprive myſelf of all claim and title to it. The Pſalmiſt has given a direct anſwer to this ill-grounded ſuſpicion. He ſays, the mercy of the Lord is from everlaſting to everlaſting.

UPON THEM THAT FEAR HIM. This is their character: they fear their God. Once there was no fear of God before their eyes; but now they know him to be their Father. The Spirit of adoption has given them joy and peace in believing it. Hence a holy

filial fear rules in their hearts, and influences their walk. While it operates thus; and as obedient children, they fear to offend their loving Father, and desire to please him in all things, what ground have they to suspect that his mercy towards them should fail?

But may they not cease to fear him, and then he will cease to be merciful to them? No, blessed be God. He has made ample provision in this case. "I will put my fear," says he, "into their hearts, and they SHALL NOT depart from me." This fear is one of the fruits of the Spirit, which he produces in all the children of God. And they have it from him as a covenant blessing, which is full security for its continuance. It is one of the graces provided for them in Jesus, by the Father's immutable love. "I will give them," says he, "one heart and one way; that they may fear me FOR EVER!" The Holy Spirit is the guardian of this never-failing fear. It is his office to put it, and then to keep it in their hearts. He has the whole charge of it, and therefore he has promised to abide with them for ever, that they may fear the Lord all the days of their lives.

How exactly suited is this scripture to the case of the tempted christian! What a full provision is there made in it for his safety and peace! God has mercy for him and plenteous redemption---mercy reaching from everlasting to everlasting---always kind to the miserable. Mercy and misery are related as sin and

ſalvation. There is not any thing, which a ſinner can want, but mercy has a ſupply for him---a promiſed, a covenant, a never-failing ſupply. It is a Father's mercy, which will never leave his children, and the ſame mercy will not ſuffer them to leave him. His mind is fixed upon ſhewing them mercy for ever and ever; and therefore he gives them his Spirit to abide with them, and to dwell in them. He abides with them, and they live: he dwells in them, and they walk in the fear of God. And by the ſupply of the Spirit they go on, till they finiſh their courſe with joy.

By meditating upon this ſcripture, the believer is ſet at liberty. Though his faith ſtaggered a little, yet the trial of it has done him good. He has learned an uſeful leſſon, and gained much experience by it. His reflections upon what has paſſed in his mind, are ſuch as theſe---

O how fooliſh was I to forget the atonement and righteouſneſs of my deareſt Immanuel, in whom alone I have pardon and acceptance! How baſe was I, and ungrateful! I was tempted to expect that in myſelf, which I can have only in him. Vile legal creature that I am! I abhor myſelf for behaving ſo ill to my beſt friend. What good can I have, but what I firſt receive from him? I agree with the apoſtle, that in me, that is in my fleſh, dwelleth no good thing. I am a very ſink of ſin, and of all uncleanneſs. I deſerve mercy no more than the devil does. And yet

I was looking out for ſome good quality in myſelf, on account of which God might be merciful to me. Whereas I am now ſatisfied he has no mercy, but in Jeſus. All his mercies are covenant mercies; given from mere grace, and given to miſerable ſinners —not to make them ſelf-admirers, but to humble them—not to lead them to think that they can bring God in debt to them for his own gifts, or for the right uſe of them, which is a freſh gift—but he gives all to the praiſe of the glory of his grace. He delighteth in mercy; and my caſe required mercy. It was ſuch as his mercy could get all the honour of relieving. Therefore I ought, in the hour of temptation, to have truſted in his mercy, to have hoped in his mercy in time of trouble, and to have loved him for his mercy in time of miſery. Here ſhould my faith have directed its eye, and not to any good which I have done, or can do. I ſhould have remembered, how it was with the election of grace, and with the veſſels of mercy. God has one way of dealing with them all. Not by works of righteouſneſs which they have done, but according to his mercy he ſaveth them, freely, fully, eternally. All is from his own good will, from firſt to laſt. Every motive, which inclines him to do good to any ſinner, is not excited by what the ſinner does or is, but ariſes from himſelf. And when he beſtows any good, it never is deſerved, but is entirely an act of

ſovereign grace, flowing from the Father's love, out of the Son's fulneſs, by the influence of the holy Spirit; and is given and continued to magnify and exalt the mercy of the eternal Three. O how did I diſhonour the divine perfections by giving way to legal hopes, and by ſuppoſing that the divine will would be governed by my more or leſs deſervings? Where ſhould I be, if I had my deſervings? God forgive me. I ſee mine error. I am humbled for it, and I repent with ſhame and ſorrow. I hope my paſt miſconduct will prove a bleſſing to me: For it has certainly taught me to truſt leſs to myſelf, and more to the word of God; to depend leſs upon my own doings, and more upon free grace promiſes. To the word which cannot be broken, I would truſt in the time of need. Whoever truſts in it ſhall never be confounded. This I know to be true by happy experience. I will therefore read, and hear, and ſtudy it night and day. By means of it the Lord wrought a great deliverance for me. My feet were almoſt gone, my treadings had well nigh ſlipt; but he ſent out his word and ſaved me. I read and believed, that the Father was not reconciled to me for the goodneſs of my walk, but that reconciliation was planned in the great covenant before all worlds, and was carried into execution by the life and death of Immanuel; it was his peculiar, his glorious, his incommunicable work; it was his ſole prerogative

to make peace by the blood of his croſs. O that I may be enabled to maintain it the next time my faith is tried, and to put honour aud glory upon the divine record concerning it. I read and believed, that the Father does not love me upon account of my walk, but for his mercies ſake. His mercy was towards me from everlaſting. He loved me in his Son—choſe me—accepted me in the beloved—and all his dealings with me, ſince he called me by his grace, have come from the tender mercies of a covenant God and Father. I would not henceforth have one doubt of his being reconciled to me, and of his loving me perfectly in Jeſus. My faith herein has been confirmed by my late trials. I have learned by experience to rely upon what God has ſpoken, for preſerving his peace in my conſcience, and his love in my heart. Depending on his faithful word, and mighty arm, I would walk with him this day for the ſtrengthening and increaſing of thoſe graces. This is the deſire and prayer of my ſoul.

O Father of mercies, hear me for Jeſu's ſake. I acknowledge my ſinfulneſs and unworthineſs, even in my cloſeſt walk with thee. I am leſs than the leaſt of thy mercies: yea, deſerving the heavieſt of thy vengeance. It is of the Lord's mercy, that it has not fallen upon me long ago, and I truſt in his word, that it will never fall upon me. Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth

iniquity, and paſſeth by the tranſgreſſion of the remnant of thine heritage? Thou retaineſt not thine anger againſt them for ever: becauſe thou delighteſt in mercy. Glory be to thee for thine unſpeakable mercies: for thou haſt given me faith in the atonement of Jeſus, by whom I have peace with thee my reconciled God, and by whom I have experienced thy great love to me. On thee, O my God, is ſtill my hope. I look up to thee the giver of thoſe graces for ſtrength to maintain them in my daily walk. I do believe in the ſacrifice and righteouſneſs of Immanuel, Lord help mine unbelief. I find it hard to preſerve in my practice, what I believe to be true in doctrine: And therefore on thy preſent help I muſt continually depend. Lord ſtrengthen me mightily by thy Spirit in the inner man againſt temptations. I am daily and hourly called upon to exerciſe my faith, and when thy grace does not hold me up, I fall. The fiery darts of ſatan eaſily inflame me, when they are thrown at my legal hopes, falſe dependencies, or ſelf-righteous tempers. My ſhield, which ſhould quench them, is ready to drop out of mine hand. I ſhould fall a prey to the enemy, and the fire would conſume me, if thy mercy was not over me for good. O my God and Father, ſtrengthen my faith againſt the wiles and aſſaults of ſatan, and againſt the workings of mine own unbelief. When theſe trials come, keep me ſenſible of my weakneſs and

dependent on thy promiſed ſtrength, that I may meet them ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of thy might. O let every trial teach me more of thy peace in my conſcience, and more of thy love in my heart, that I may keep on in a ſteady courſe, walking humbly with my God. This is the work of thy good Spirit. I cannot preſerve nor improve his graces, unleſs he be every moment preſent with me. He is the giver, the continuer, the increaſer of them all. O God the Holy Ghoſt, I therefore beſeech thee to water thy graces every moment. Leaſt any hurt them, keep them night and day. Never leave me nor forſake me, but what thou haſt graciouſly begun, that mightily carry on, in my ſoul. Temptations are ſtrong, and I am weak; ſtand by me in the hour of need. And if my faith be tried with fiery temptations, let it come out of them, like gold out of the fire. O thou Almighty Spirit, confirm by trials, improve by experience, my truſt in thy promiſed help. Let me go on from faith to faith. Keep up the confidence of my rejoicing in my reconciled God and loving Father, that I may walk humbly with him in ſweet communion, and holy fellowſhip in the way everlaſting. Grant me theſe mercies, gracious Father, for thy dear Son's ſake, by the influence of the eternal Spirit, three perſons in one Jehovah, to whom be equal praiſe for ever and ever. *Amen.*

CHAP. V.

The believer orders his ſteps according to the word, walking with a free heart in the king's high-way of obedience.

MEDITATE, O my ſoul, upon the the wonders which Divine Love hath wrought for thee and for thy ſalvation. Review the many, many mercies of thy paſt life; and conſider, that thou art called upon to walk this day with THY God. What a privilege is this! He is thy God, and thou art his adopted Son. O what an high honor has he conferred upon thee! He has taken thee into the moſt noble family, yea, into the divine houſhold of faith. He has permitted thee to walk with him as thy Father. He has appointed the way, promiſed to be with thee in it, and every moment, and at every ſtep to be doing thee good. There can be no happineſs ſuperior to this on earth. Prize it: For it is ineſtimable. Enjoy it: For it is heaven begun. Walking with God by faith, is preſent enjoyment of him, and will infallibly bring thee to the end of thy journey, to full and everlaſting enjoyment.

Hold faſt then the confidence of thy rejoicing. What thou haſt been taught by the holy Spirit, depend upon him for confirming and eſtabliſhing. He has enabled thee to ſee the glory of the finiſhed ſalvation of Je-

ſus, and to believe the divine record concerning it. Thou haſt renounced every thing for the pardon of thy ſins, but the bloodſhedding of the Lamb, and every thing for acceptance, but the Lord our righteouſneſs. Thy faith herein has been tried, and the trial ended well. Thy temptations were manifold and violent, but they have done thee good. They have ſhewed thee the neceſſity of depending upon the perfect work of the God-man—of rejoicing wholly in Chriſt Jeſus, and of having no confidence in the fleſh. They have alſo been the means of convincing thee, that thou ſtandeth by faith. Be not high-minded then, but fear. And let thy fear of thyſelf lead thee to truſt more in God. Rely on his faithful arm to maintain and to carry on his own work in thy ſoul. Remember, he has promiſed it. Thy ſufficiency is of God, and he has engaged to give thee grace ſufficient for thee. He has undertaken as a Father, to ſupply all thy wants, to deliver thee from all miſeries, and to with-hold from thee no manner of thing that is good. Thy ſalvation is ſafe. It reſts upon a ſure foundation, as ſure as the covenant of the day and the covenant of the night. Theſe ſucceed each other by the will of their Creator, and have not been out of courſe not one ſingle moment. The ordinances of day and night are regular and certain. So certain is thy ſalvation by the ſame unerring will. While the belief of this rules in thy

conſcience, and in thy heart, thou wilt be able to reſiſt temptations. None of them will overcome thee, unleſs they ſeparate between thee and thy God. Nay, they will work for thy good, if guilty fears do not wreſt the ſhield of faith out of thine hand. O beg of God to keep thee and thy faith in the hour of trial, that thou mayeſt experience his faithfulneſs to his word. If thou put honour upon it, according to thy faith ſo ſhall it be done unto thee. Give it credit, and thy ſteps will be ordered aright. Thou wilt walk in love this day, as God hath loved thee. He will be thy portion, and the way in which he is to be enjoyed will be thy delight.

Set out then in this faith, with peace in thy conſcience, and love in thy heart—truſting to thy God and Father. Look up to him for ſtrength to maintain and to increaſe theſe graces. And hope to receive it from his faithfulneſs. Now he has put a new ſong in thy mouth, even praiſe unto thy God, go on thy way believing and rejoicing. Jeſus is thine with all his fulneſs. And he has promiſed thee a conſtant ſupply of the Spirit, that thou mayeſt have grace for grace to enable thee to walk humbly with thy God.

Mind then, thy walk is to be ordered according to his revealed will, and in his appointed way of obedience to it; for all rational creatures are bound to obey God. As ſoon as he makes known his will to them, it

becomes their indiſpenſible duty. His will is one, like himſelf, unchangeably the ſame, yeſterday, to-day, and for ever: for when revealed by the ſovereign creator it becomes to mankind a law, which altereth not. It binds angels and men every moment, in every point and circumſtance. And its obligation will never ceaſe. For all his commandments are ſure, they ſtand faſt for ever and ever. What he has commanded is as fixt as the ſun before him. It ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witneſs in heaven.

It pleaſed the ſovereign creator to enforce this holy, juſt and good law by proper ſanctions. Out of his mere grace he has promiſed life to obedience, which man engaged to perform: and he threatened death to diſobedience, to which penalty man ſubmitted. Thereby this law became a covenant of works. The promiſe was to him, who ſhould continue obedient in all things: for Moſes deſcribeth the righteouſneſs which is of the law, that the man who fulfilleth thoſe things ſhall live by them. But if he does not fulfill them perfectly, without one failing, he then comes under the penalty, which God had threatened to diſobedience—"Curſed is he who continueth not in all things, that are written in the book of the law to do them:" this curſe draws after it all the pains and penalties of the broken law in earth and in hell.

Under this law of works Adam was placed, and under it all his deſcendants are born. He and they are bound to keep the law in their own perſons, if they would receive the promiſe, or liable to ſuffer the penalty, if they tranſgreſs. Adam broke the law of works, and we all in him; for in him all have ſinned. We were all in his loins, when he fell, and forfeited in his attainder. By the offence of that one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation. The righteous judge paſſed the ſentence, and decreed, that by the law of works no fleſh living ſhould be ſaved: For he has proved in his word both Jews and Gentiles to be under the law, and under ſin, which is the tranſgreſſion of it. Whereby every mouth is ſtopped, and all the world is become guilty before God: Therefore by the deeds of the law, there ſhall no fleſh be juſtified in his ſight.

In the law of works there was no proviſion made for a ſurety; but it did not abſolutely exclude one: Therefore it left room for the covenant of grace, in which a proviſion was made in the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt for ſecuring the divine honor of this holy law. He undertook to ſtand up in man's place and ſtead, to magnify the precepts of the law in his life, and to glorify the penalties of the law in his death, that not one jot or tittle of it might fail till all was fulfilled. And as he was God over all, bleſſed for ever, his life

and death put everlaſting honor upon the divine law. His obedience was of ineſtimable value, and his ſufferings were infinitely ſufficient to take away ſin. Chriſt is now the end of the law for righteouſneſs. He anſwered the end of the law for his people by obeying and ſuffering for them: And every one of them can now plead by faith a perfect fulfilling of all the precepts, a perfect ſuffering of all the penalties in the perſon of their divine ſurety. God the Father is faithful and juſt to his word and engagements with his ſon: He has made known his will in the immutable record of his grace, "that whoſoever believeth in Jeſus ſhould not periſh, but ſhould have everlaſting life." How can he periſh? Jeſus died for him. He ſhall live with God in everlaſting life: becauſe Jeſus lived for him. And this is the declared will of the Father concerning all that believe in his only begotten Son.

Remember then, O my ſoul, that thou art not under the law, but under grace. Thou art ſaved from the law, under the form of a covenant of works. Thou art not bound to keep its precepts, in order to have life for thy obedience, nor yet to ſuffer its penalties for thy diſobedience. Thy ſurety undertook to act and ſuffer for thee. He was to anſwer the law in its commands and demands to every jot and tittle. And he did. Whatever it required, whatever it threatened was perfectly fulfilled in the perſon of thy God

and Saviour: and he has abſolutely diſcharged thee from it, as a law of works. Thou art to have nothing to do with it in that view; nay, he has forbidden thee to keep it in hopes that thou mayeſt live thereby. The irreverſible decree entered in the records of heaven has enacted—BY THE WORKS OF THE LAW SHALL NO FLESH BE JUSTIFIED. Thou art now to look upon the law in the matter of juſtifying and giving life; as a woman looks upon her dead huſband. She is freed from the marriage contract with him, and may now give her heart and hand to another: ſo art thou freed from the bond of the legal covenant. Thou art become dead to the law by the body of Chriſt, who has eſpouſed and betrothed thee to himſelf, that ſerving him in newneſs of ſpirit, and not in the oldneſs of the letter, thou mayeſt bring forth fruit unto God. This is thy high privilege. Thy firſt huſband is dead: happy for thee, thou art lawfully married to another—Thy huſband is thy maker, Jehovah of hoſts is his name. The word made fleſh has paid all thy debts, ſuffered thy puniſhment, wrought out a perfect righteouſneſs, and won a crown of perfect glory for thee. O what a divine honor has he put upon thee! Thou art now one with Immanuel in a bond of everlaſting love. He has given himſelf to thee, with all he has and all he is; and it is thy happineſs now, not to be thine own, but the Lord's—not to follow

thine own will, but his. The law of thy Lord is liberty. As taught by his ſpirit, and performed by faith it is perfect freedom. Whilſt thou walkeſt with him in obedience to it, and leaneſt on thy beloved every ſtep, thou wilt find deliverance from all ſpiritual tyranny and bondage, and wilt enjoy the light of his countenance, and the love of his heart. When the Son has thus made thee free, thou art free indeed—free, now thy heart is ſet at liberty to run with Jeſus in the way of his commandments.

In this view, O my ſoul, thou canſt look with delight at the moſt holy law. Attend to it cloſely, and ſtudy it carefully. In order to obey, as a chriſtian, theſe following conſiderations ſhould be well underſtood and digeſted: becauſe under the influence of them every ſtep of thy walk is to be ordered. O pray then for the ſpirit of wiſdom to teach thee practically:

Firſt, that thy walk with God in the way of obedience is not to fulfill the law, as a covenant of works. Thou art not required to do this. Thou canſt not do it. Immanuel, thy divine ſurety, took it upon himſelf. Becauſe it was impoſſible for thee, a fallen creature, to keep the law, ſo as to be juſtified by it, he therefore came in perſon to fulfill it. He honoured its precepts by his infinite obedience. He magnified its penalties by his ineſtimable ſacrifice. And this is thy juſtifying righteouſneſs. Through faith in

the life and death of the God-man, thou art not only freed from guilt and condemnation, from curſe and hell, but art alſo intitled to life and glory. The law is now on thy ſide, and is become thy friend. It acquits thee. It juſtifies thee. It will give thee the reward promiſed to obedience. The law in the hand of thy Saviour has nothing but bleſſings to beſtow upon thee. Thou art to receive it at his mouth and to obey him: but not from any legal hopes of heaven, or from any ſlaviſh fears of hell: for then thou wouldſt come under the covenant of works again. Whereas thou art not under the law, but under grace: mind thy privilege, and pray for grace to live up to it. Thou art not under the law, bound to keep it perfectly in thine own perſon, or in caſe of failing condemned by it, and under its fearful curſe; but thou art under grace, a ſtate of grace, through faith in the obedience and ſufferings of thy bleſſed ſurety, and under the power of grace, ſweetly inclining thee to love, and mightily enabling thee to keep the law of the Lord thy God. Live thus by grace, and ſin ſhall not have dominion over thee. Under the reign of grace, the tyrant ſin is always dethroned. Obey under grace, as freely and fully ſaved by faith in Jeſus, and this will make thy walk eaſy and evangelical: thou wilt go on with a free ſpirit, and wilt delight thyſelf in the ways of God, walking with him.

2. By faith, and not by ſight. This is the great ſpring of all goſpel obedience. Faith has an univerſal efficacy: for thus it is written— "Without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God." He is not pleaſed with the thing done, but with the principle on which it is done. He looks at the heart. Hearing the word, or ſaying prayers, or giving alms, or doing any thing commanded, are not pleaſing in themſelves; but they muſt be performed upon a right motive, and to a right end. And both theſe come from faith. The apoſtle mentions the motive, which had influenced every ſtep of his chriſtian courſe, "We walk by faith, and not by ſight."— we judge of our ſtate by what God ſays of it, and we order our walk accordingly. We give credit to his witneſs of our being pardoned and juſtified freely by grace through faith, and we depend for the truth of this not on what we ſee, but on what we believe. We truſt not on our good frames, or warm feelings, or ſenſible comforts, or to any of the genuine fruits and effects of faith, but we truſt what God ſays ſimply, as his record: and therefore we walk in a conſtant dependence on the truth of God in his word, and upon the faithfulneſs of God to his word. Some promiſed grace we ſtand in need of every ſtep; and we rely upon his word, which cannot be broken, and upon his faithfulneſs, which cannot fail. Thus we go on, and we find the promiſe made good, according to our faith.

Such was the apoſtle's wslk. And is thine directed by the ſame motive? Search, O my ſoul, and examine upon what principle thou goeſt to duty. Is it in the obedience of faith? Doſt thou take no ſtep without the warrant of the word of God? Doſt thou give full credit to what God ſays in it of thy ſtate, as a juſtified perſon? And does this appear from thy dependence upon his faithfulneſs to make good every thing promiſed to them, who are in that ſtate? Bleſſed art thou of the Lord, if thou art walking by this faith. O praiſe his holy name, who has thus highly favoured thee, and aſcribe to him all the glory. So will thy end be right, as well as thy motive. True faith takes no honor to itſelf. It is an emptying humbling grace. Its ſpring-head is in covenant love, and it is given from diſtinguiſhing favor and ſovereign mercy. It has no foundation, when given, but the word of God: nothing to reſt on, but the divine truth: no ſupport, but the divine power: and no growth, but from the divine influence. What then does it leave a man to glory in? Whoever has it, has it all from God, and while he is in his right mind, living by it, he will be diſpoſed to give God all the glory of it: even for common mercies, as well as ſpiritual, he will live by the faith of the ſon of God. Whether he eats or drinks, or whatever he does, he does all in the name of the Lord Jeſus, giving thanks to God, and

the Father by him. And thus he will go on ſweetly and happily, obeying not, from ſlaviſh fears or legal hopes, but

3. From holy love, which is the fruit and conſequence of walking by faith. Faith worketh love, and then worketh by love. The faith of the Goſpel, as a grace of the Spirit, worketh chiefly by love to God, and to man for God's ſake: for the Goſpel diſcovers the way of ſalvation, contrived by the eternal Three, fulfilled in the life and death of Immanuel, and applied to the ſinner's heart by the eternal Spirit. Whoever is enabled to believe the Goſpel, will ſee himſelf an object of the covenant love of the bleſſed Trinity, and will therefore love Father, Son, and Spirit: for we love him, ſays the apoſtle, becauſe he firſt loved us. And faith in his love to us, will make us that we ſhall neither be barren nor unfruitful. Love is very active. Obeying from love is very ſweet. How active! How ſweet is obedience, when the love of God is ſhed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghoſt, who is given unto us! He is an almighty agent. He overcomes the power of legal unbelieving workings, and puts a new ſpring to duty into the heart. He manifeſts the love of God in Chriſt, his free diſtinguiſhing love, the exceeding riches of it, and the numerous bleſſings flowing from it through time and eternity. In the ſenſe of theſe mercies he excites gratitude, and puts it upon acting. This grace has a

wonderful influence. "What return ſhall I make unto the Lord!" is the devout breathing of the grateful heart. While the love of Chriſt conſtraineth it, all the affections follow him, and the ſoul delights itſelf in his ways. Then none of his commandments will be grievous. Nay, his yoke itſelf becomes eaſy, and his burden light: O triumphant love! How active, how ſweet did he find it, who cried out—"I can do ALL things, I can ſuffer ALL things, I am more than conqueror, through him that loveth me."

And is not this, O my ſoul, thy happy caſe! O prize thy privilege, and adorn it in thy life. Walk in love with thy reconciled God, and out of love to him perform all duties, and bear all croſſes. Remember, thou art not required to obey, in order to be ſaved for thine obedience, but thou art already ſaved; and therefore out of gratitude to thy deareſt Saviour, thou art bound to love him and to obey him. Thou canſt not love his perſon, and yet hate his will. "If ye love me, ſays he, keep my commandments" —give this proof of it, keep in my way, doing my commandments. But whatever ye do, let it come from the heart. Obey me, but ſee it be with a willing mind, and with a free ſpirit. When all ſprings from love, then my ſervice will be perfect freedom. I would have you to do my will, but without fear; not for life, but from life; not that ye may live, but becauſe ye live. Do it,

as ſons, and not as ſlaves: the ſlave abideth not in the houſe for ever, but the ſon abideth for ever. In this free ſpirit of adoption ſerve me, as ſons of God, and heirs of God, and joint heirs with me. Stand faſt therefore in the liberty, wherewith I have made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

To obey from life and ſalvation received and enjoyed is ſweet liberty. To obey, as the condition of life and ſalvation, is bitter ſlavery: it is an intolerable yoke, becauſe it is not poſſible any fallen man ſhould ſo keep the law, as to live thereby. But the believer freed from this condition by Chriſt's keeping the law for him is in liberty, he is ſaved from the penalty annexed to the tranſgreſſion; he is entitled to the life promiſed to obedience, and thereby he is delivered from legal hopes and from guilty fears. In this faith he walks on delightfully in the ways of obedience: for he is reconciled to the law through the grace that is in Chriſt Jeſus: he loves it. O what love, ſays he, have I unto thy law! Becauſe now I find it according to the promiſe written upon my heart. And this is a

4. Motive to goſpel obedience. The new covenant runs thus—" I will put, ſays God, my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people: and they ſhall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, ſaying, know the

Lord: for they ſhall all know me from the leaſt of them to the greateſt of them." The heart is by nature as hard as adamant. It is enmity itſelf againſt the holy law. But the Lord here engages to take away the ſtony heart, and to give an heart of fleſh, upon which he will write the ten commandments; not in tables of ſtone, but in the fleſhly tables of the heart. The Spirit of the living God will teach all his children to know their Father, he will manifeſt to them their adoption, he will reveal to them their Father's love in Jeſus, and he will make their hearts happy in the enjoyment of it. Then the holy fruits of this love will appear towards man. It will work ſweetly in benevolence, and effectually in beneficence. The love of God will open the contracted heart, enlarge the ſelfiſh, warm the cold, and bring liberality out of the covetous. When the holy Spirit teaches brotherly love, he overcomes all oppoſition to it. He ſays to his diſciples—"Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Chriſt's ſake hath forgiven you." And he makes them kind one to another: they ſhew it by every good word and work. Thus, by manifeſting to them the Father reconciled in Jeſus, and by enabling them to love man for his ſake, he writes upon their hearts the two great commandments, on which hang all the law and the prophets. The love of God, ſays the apoſtle to the Romans, is ſhed abroad in our

hearts, by the holy Ghoſt, and to the Theſſalonians, ye yourſelves are taught of God to love one another. Thus he engages the affections of the ſoul to the holy law, and inclines the inner man to love obedience. It ceaſeth to be a yoke and a burden. How eaſy is it to do what one loves? If you dearly love any perſon, what a pleaſure is it to ſerve him? What will not love put you upon doing or ſuffering to oblige him? Let love rule in the heart to God and to man, his law will then become delightful, and obedience to it will be pleaſantneſs. The ſoul will run, yea, inſpired by love, it will mount up with wings as eagles, in the way of God's commandments.

Happy are the people, that are in ſuch a caſe! And is it not, O my ſoul, in ſome meaſure thine? Haſt thou not been taught to love God, and his ways? Since thou haſt been acquainted with him as thy loving Father in Jeſus, has not thy faith been working by love to him, and to his will, and to his whole houſehold and family? Remember this is promiſed. All the children of God are to be taught to know and to love their heavenly Father. This is the very tenor of the covenant grace, which the almighty ſpirit has undertaken to fulfill. And he cannot fail in his office. It is his crown and glory to make good his covenant engagements. O truſt him then, and put honour upon his faithfulneſs. He has pro-

miſed to guide thee wtth his counſel, and to ſtrengthen thee with his might in the way of obedience to thy reconciled God.

What is within thee, or without thee to oppoſe thy walking in love with him he will incline thee to reſiſt, and he will enable thee to overcome. O what mayeſt thou not expect from ſuch a divine friend, who is to abide with thee on purpoſe to keep thy heart right with God. What cannot he do, what will he not do for thee? Such as is the love of the Father and of the Son, ſuch is the love of the Holy Ghoſt, the ſame free, perfect, everlaſting love. Read his promiſes of it. Meditate on them. Pray to him for increaſing faith to mix with them; that he, dwelling in the temple of thy heart, thou mayeſt have fellowſhip there with the Father and with the Son. Whatever in thee is pardoned through the Son's atonement, pray the Holy Spirit to ſubdue, that it may not interrupt communion with thy God. And whatever grace is to be received out of the fulneſs of Jeſus in order to keep up and to promote that communion, intreat the holy Spirit to give it thee with growing ſtrength. But pray in faith nothing wavering. So ſhall the love of God rule in thy heart. And then thou ſhalt be like the ſun, when it goeth forth in its might, ſhining clearer and clearer to the perfect day. O may thy courſe be like his, as free, as regular, and as communicative of good, that

thy daily petition may be anſwered, and that the will of thy Father may be done in earth, as it is done in heaven.

When all theſe things concur, what can be wanting to make the way of obedience eaſy and pleaſant? It is not now an hard burden, impoſſible to be borne. The Spirit of life which is in Chriſt Jeſus, hath made it eaſy. He has reconciled the believer to the law: for he ſhews it to him in ſurety, magnified and made honorable — magnified infinitely in his life—made everlaſting honorable in his death: ſo that the Father can get the fulleſt glory to every divine perfection, even to his juſtice, by ſaving ſinners through faith in the righteouſneſs of his Son: he can be juſt, and yet the juſtifier of the ungodly. The believer, perſuaded of this is reconciled to God. Being no longer under the law, as a covenant of works, but under grace, he loves the law, and walks with God in ſweet obedience to it. He ſets out, and goes on every ſtep, in faith —truſting to the acceptance of his perſon, and of his ſervices in the beloved. He does not work now, in order to be ſaved; but he works, becauſe he is ſaved. And he aſcribes all he does to the praiſe of the glory of free grace. He works from gratitude, and the faith of God's elect always does. It never fails to ſhew itſelf by love. The holy Spirit wins the heart by revealing to it the love of God, and thereby draws out the affections after him. When the commandment comes,

"My ſon, give me thy heart." The ſon is ready, "Lord, take it, and ſeal it thine for ever." And whatever inbred enmity may remain againſt giving it to the Lord, the holy Spirit has undertaken to ſubdue it. It is his office to take away the ſtony heart, and to create an heart of fleſh, ſoft and willing to receive the impreſſion of this grace. With the ſame finger, which once wrote the holy law upon tables of ſtone, it is now written upon the fleſhly tables of the heart. And then the love of God, and the love of man are clearly taught, and effectually enforced. What a change does this make in obedience! Hard things are now done with eaſe. Rough ways are made ſmooth. Painful things become delightful. The labour of love is ſweet labour: becauſe the heart is in it. The feet run; the hands work: all the faculties are ready to exert themſelves, when love commands.

O my God, let it be thus with me. Thou haſt given me an earneſt deſire to walk with thee in thy ways, guide me in them by thine almighty Spirit. Let him abide with me, holy Father, as the Spirit of adoption, that I may always ſerve thee, as thy reconciled child, not under the law, but under grace. I would gladly walk with thee every ſtep by faith, and that faith working by love to thee and to thy whole will. O God, give me grace ſufficient for my holy walk. Let thy faithful promiſe be daily fulfilled: write thy

law ſtill plainer in mine inward parts, and let it be more fairly copied out of my life. I want to love thee more, as thou knoweſt. O my God, keep my heart ſenſible of the exceeding riches of thy love to me, and let the growing ſenſe of this increaſe mine to thee. In the ſtrength of thy good Spirit, enable me to overcome inward and outward oppoſition to my walking with thee in love. Let him ſtrengthen me mightily in the inner man for every labour of love. From him cometh power to embrace and to cleave with full purpoſe of heart unto the ways of God—to love what he loves—and to hate what he hates. O thou bleſſed Spirit of the Father and of the Son, make me willing, keep me able to enjoy the Father's love in his Son: and let it be a growing love, abounding yet more and more in knowledge, and in all ſenſible feeling, that I may run and not be weary, may be going on to the end, and not be faint. Even ſo. Let it be done unto thy ſervant according to thy word, wherein thou haſt cauſed me to put my truſt. Let me have fellowſhip with the Father in his love, through the ſalvation of his Son, by thine influence upon my heart, now, henceforth, and for ever. *Amen.*

CHAP. ~~IV.~~ VI.

The walk of the believer in the way of duty.

IT is very hard to go on in a ſtraight courſe and for any length of time. The hindrances are many. To underſtand the nature and obligation of duty, to enter upon it with right motives, to perform it in a proper temper; to go through it without backwardneſs or wearineſs, not by conſtraint, but willingly, and to find the true end of doing it anſwered, theſe are great difficulties: But they will be removed in ſome meaſure out of the believer's walk; if he attend to what was ſaid before of obedience in general, and if he be enabled to bring it into practice.

It cannot be too often repeated, that the true believer is not under the law, as a covenant of works—bound to keep the precept for life, or liable to the penalty of death. He is not under the law in this reſpect, but under grace. He is one with Chriſt, who kept the precept, and ſuffered the penalty for him, as his ſurety, and in his ſtead. He has put in his plea, and taken the benefit of Chriſt's ſuretiſhip. His plea has been admitted; and therefore he is in a ſtate of perfect acceptance. He ſtands in the liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made him free. Grace reigns in him, and over him, and renders his obedience perfect freedom. He

obeys, but it is all in faith. He works, but it is from a ſenſe of the Father's love to him in his Son. Gratitude taught by the Holy Spirit, influences his heart and life. His heart has the love of God written upon it, and his life manifeſts it. He ſerves God with a thankful mind and without fear, and cheerfully does all the good he can to man for God's ſake.

The believer will never get on in the way of duty, unleſs he learns to obey upon theſe goſpel principles. He will ſtand in need of their aſſiſtance at every ſtep: For he will meet with conſtant oppoſition to them. The fleſh will not come under grace. The carnal mind is always legal. The old man of ſin knows nothing but working for life, and will not ſubmit to any other way. Our ſinful nature is altogether for the covenant of works. Jews, Turks, heathens, and nominal Chriſtians are all upon one plan: they expect God will be merciful to them for their doings. And the children of God are exerciſed with this ſelf-righteous ſpirit more or leſs all their days. Is it not, O my ſoul, thy grief and burden? Art thou not daily plagued with it in thy duties? And though thy principles be very evangelical, yet they too often fail thee in practice. O beg of God then, earneſtly and often, that thou mayeſt be caſt into the mould of the Goſpel, quite evangelized in thy mind, and mayeſt perform all duties upon ſuch motives as he himſelf requires and approves.

Duty is a debt owing to God—due from

the creature to the creator. The obligation to it ariſes from the abſolute dependence of the one upon the other; and it conſiſts in acknowledging this in the appointed way, by a perfect and continual ſervice of every faculty —the creature being entirely ſubject to the will of the creator, and living in never-failing conformity to it: for the will of God doth bind all men on earth, and angels and glorified ſpirits in heaven. It is an unchangeable law, obliging for ever all creatures to obedience, not only on account of the matter contained in it, but alſo with reſpect to the ſovereign authority of the almighty lawgiver. And this obligation Chriſt in the goſpel has not in the leaſt diſſolved, but on all occaſions has confirmed and ſtrengthened. How deciſive are theſe words! "Think not that I am come to deſtroy the law and the prophets, I am not come to deſtroy, but to fulfil," to fulfil the law in mine own perſon, as the ſurety for my people, and to put the love of it into their hearts, and to engage them, and to enable them to practice it in their lives; though not for the ſame end, for which I fulfilled it.

Duty is always one and the ſame—a debt always due to God. But the debt of obedience being withheld, and the death of ſuffering being incurred, the believer is taught to plead his diſcharge from ſuffering under Chriſt, and his fulfilling of obedience in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt. With this faith he

has a delightful proſpect of duty. God is now at peace with him. God loves him in his Son. It is his high privilege to enjoy the ſenſe of thoſe diſtinguiſhing favours. For this end he is admitted to walk with his God. What an honour is this! Having received the adoption of ſons, he is bleſſed with his Father's love, and is taken into near fellowſhip with him. What a happineſs is this! "Son, all that I have is thine, it is freely given to thee in Jeſus, and thou art now called upon to enjoy me and mine in thy holy walk." Here duty becomes his privilege. It is exalted and ſpiritualized into a goſpel grace. He is bound to it, but it is by the cords of love. The pleaſing bonds of gratitude tie his heart to obedience, to a free, holy, evangelical obedience. He obeys, not as a ſlave but as a ſon—not for fear, but becauſe Chriſt has ſet him at liberty—not that God may accept, pardon, and juſtify him, but becauſe God has done all for him, and will do all in him—not that he may have heaven for his obedience, but becauſe heaven is reſerved for him, and he for it. He therefore looks at duty, as greatly refined by the goſpel. Every act of it, done in faith, is an act of fellowſhip with the Father and with the Son; and by the grace of the Spirit every act brings the Father's love through the Son's ſalvation into experience. He has communion with his God in all he does. This ennobles duty. It is hereby raiſed to a di-

vine honour: For it is hereby made, to them who are in Chriſt, the higheſt privilege they can have on this ſide of heaven.

When the holy Spirit writes the law upon the heart, he then teaches this obedience of faith. He does not aboliſh duty, but he enforces it upon right motives, and directs it to a right end. The ſame duties remain in the goſpel, but not upon the ſame obligation. Law duties, as conditions of life, cannot be fulfilled. The Judge himſelf has decreed, that by the works of the law there ſhall no fleſh be juſtified in his ſight. Therefore the law, as a covenant of works, does not enter into the believer's obedience. He obeys becauſe he is freed from this covenant—not freed from doing the ſame duties, which this covenant required, but freed from doing them upon law motives, neither expecting the promiſed life on account of keeping the precepts, nor fearing the threatened penalty on account of not keeping them. It is his privilege to obey, becauſe he is ſaved. He works from a free ſpirit, and with a thankful heart. He does all his duties in faith. He is ſpiritual in them, acting upon the endearing motive of God's love to him in Chriſt, as it has been revealed to his heart by the holy Spirit. He hopes for the acceptance of them only through the interceſſion of Chriſt: And after he has done them ever ſo well, he deſires grace from Chriſt to return him all his glory. Thus in every duty he aims at

fellowſhip with God in Chriſt through the Spirit, and ſeeks to preſent an odour of a ſweet ſmell, a ſacrifice acceptable, well pleaſing to God.

Whatever thou art required to do, remember, O my ſoul, that thou art under grace, and it is thy privilege to do it in faith. View the two tables in the hand of thy Saviour, and receive the ten commandments from his mouth. Happy for thee, Jeſus is thy lawgiver. His ſpirit will goſpelize thine obedience. He will bring thine heart into it. He will ſet thee in the chariot of love, and thou ſhalt ride on proſperouſly: He will oil the wheels of duty, and they ſhall run eaſy and pleaſant. Thou ſhalt be carried ſweetly through duty, thy beloved being preſent and converſing with thee in it: yea, thy faith working by love to him will render fellowſhip with God in all thou doeſt, the joy of thy heart and the glory of thy life.

O beg of thy divine teacher thus to ſpiritualize thine obedience. From him only canſt thou learn the two great commandments, which are the ſum and ſubſtance of the will of thy God. In the firſt his nature is revealed, and then his worſhip. He is the Lord thy God, Jehovah thy Alehim; Jehovah means the ſelf-exiſtent Godhead; and Alehim, the perſons in covenant, Father, Son, and Spirit, partakers of the ſame ſelf-exiſtence, and divine glory, without any difference, or inequality. There can be no true

religion without the true object of worſhip, and he cannot be worſhipped unleſs he be known; therefore it is an indiſpenſable duty to know the Lord God. But how ſhall fallen man attain to this knowledge? He loſt it by ſin, and he cannot by any reaſoning faculty or power of his own recover it. It is a matter of fact, that no man did ever, by ſearching, find out God. And atteſted, by infallible authority, that the world, by its wiſdom knew not God. There is no true deſcription of the Godhead, but what is revealed in ſcripture; and it is altogether from the teaching of the holy Spirit, that any one ſavingly underſtands what is revealed. He the Spirit of wiſdom and revelation opens the eyes of the mind, ſets the object before them, and gives a clear idea of it. He takes of the things of God, and ſhews them to his diſciples. He does not lead them into abſtracted reaſonings about the divine nature, or what the abſolute Godhead is, but his leſſons are uſeful and practical. He teaches the knowledge of the perſons in Jehovah, as they are related to ſinners in the covenant of grace. Through him the Father is made known, "Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry, Abba, Father," *Rom.* viii. 15. Through him the Son is believed in: for no man can ſay, that Jeſus is the Lord, but by the holy Ghoſt. He diſcovers the Father's love in the Son, with its rich graces and abundant bleſſings, as it is

written: we have "received, not the Spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." He makes known the giver, and the gifts, and he is received for that very purpoſe. He ſhines into the heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt. And this is ſaving acquaintance with the Father and with the Son; For hereby the underſtanding is reſtored to the image of God; and the new man is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.

O what a mercy is this! What can call for greater praiſe! And this mercy, O my ſoul, is thine. Unſpeakably gracious has the Lord been to thee. He has given thee the knowledge of himſelf. His image is upon thine underſtanding. His light is ſhining upon it; certainly it is as great an act, as when he firſt commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs: for hereby I believe in him, I know him to be my FATHER. O precious name! The love of his heart, and it is infinite: the bleſſings of his love, and they are numberleſs, he has called me to enjoy, freely, of mere grace, of his own ſovereign good will—called me to the adoption of ſons, to the nobleſt dignity, yea, to everlaſting honour, to be a ſon of the moſt high God—God is my Father—my new-birth is from him—that which is born of the Spirit is ſpirit, and has fellowſhip with the Father of

ſpirits. Behold! what manner of love this is! No parent ever loved, or can love a child as my Father which is in heaven loves me. And I deſire in the ſenſe of this to love him, to cleave to him with full purpoſe of heart, and gratefully to devote all I have and am to his ſervice, and to his glory. O thou divine revealer of this love, enlighten mine underſtanding and influence my affections, that I may grow in the knowledge of my Father in Jeſus: For,

In him the Father only is to be known. He is his Father, as our covenant head, and therefore ours in him. God is not a Father to any, but in Chriſt. The name Father reſpects Chriſt, as the firſt-begotten, and then all his ſeed. He is the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, of whom the whole family in heaven aud earth is named, and depends for its adoption on the Father of their Lord Jeſus Chriſt. He undertook to be made man, to live and to die for the many ſons, whom he was to bring to glory: and in conſequence of his undertakings, it pleaſed the Father to lay up all fulneſs of grace for them in the God-man, their covenant head. And it pleaſes the Spirit to witneſs of this fulneſs, and to enable believers to receive out of it grace for grace. Thus he reveals Immanuel to them. They know him and are one with him. He is their Lord and their God, and by faith they live in him and upon him. Truſting to his atonement and righ-

teouſneſs they have peace with their reconciled Father, and thay enjoy his love ſhed abroad in their hearts by the holy Ghoſt. Waiting in the appointed ways they grow in the knowledge of the wonderful perſon God-Jeſus. They ſee more of the divine glory of his ſalvation work, and by depending on it daily, they enjoy more of the things which accompany ſalvation. Thrice happy are they, whoſe acquaintance with Jeſus is thus increaſing. Their happineſs has a boundleſs ſubject. They may ſtudy on, and they will find him new worlds of delight to eternity. O ye highly favoured, read and adore the wonders already wrought for you; among which, theſe are not the leaſt: "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an underſtanding to know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even his Son Jeſus Chriſt, who is the true God and eternal life." Bleſſed knowledge! they have an underſtanding given them, and they are ſavingly acquainted with the Father and with the Son, by the teaching of the holy Ghoſt. Jehovah is their Alehim. Thus they learn the firſt part of their duty, which leads them to the

Second, Namely, to love the perſons in the Godhead, becauſe they ſtand in this moſt endearing relation to them. They love the Father, who is their Father in Jeſus. They have not only heard of, and believed in, but have alſo enjoyed his precious love. It has been ſhed abroad in their hearts by the holy Ghoſt: who has overcome all reſiſtance to

his love; yea, has made enmity itſelf yield to it. Having purified the conſcience by faith, he then purifies the heart: He pours into it a ſenſe of that love, which gave his co-equal Son for them, and all the bleſſings in earth and in heaven with him. Thereby he draws up the affections in holy deſires to be more united to the Father of mercies. It is the property of love to deſire to be united to the beloved object. The holy Spirit has diſcovered the object, and has given the deſire, and he fulfils all the deſires of his own creating. He teaches all the children of God to know their Father; and to experience his love to them in his Son, and then they cannot but love him. He creates the new heart for this very purpoſe; and makes it ſenſible that the Father's love is all received through the Son, and therefore the Father and the Son are beloved with an undivided affection.

The Son is his office name. It ſhould never be heard without putting us in mind of the wonderful love of our God in his undertakings. He covenanted to be made fleſh. What a miracle of love is that! He engaged with his Father to be the ſurety for his people, to do their work, to ſuffer their puniſhment, and then God and man, one Chriſt for ever, was to have all fulneſs of covenant bleſſings to give his people. The Father has no love, the Spirit beſtows no grace, but what comes through Chriſt. A believer is therefore taught in every thing he does to

have fellowſhip with Chriſt. His ſafety, his happineſs, his hopes of happineſs to-day and for ever, are bleſſings to be received out of Immanuel's fulneſs: for he is the head over all things to the church which is his body, the fulneſs of him that filleth all in all. And while the member is receiving life, and ſenſe, and happineſs, from the fulneſs of the head, he will have freſh motives to love his divine Saviour. What can fix his affections, if gratitude to Jeſus cannot? He has every thing in him that can win the heart. He has beauty to engage love, bleſſings to increaſe love, glories to increaſe love to him for evermore. He is beauty without a rival. Whatever is charming in any earthly object is but a ray from him, and ſhould lead to him: it is but a beam to point out the matchleſs graces of Immanuel. And ſo is the lovelineſs of heavenly objects: ſaints and angels have nothing beautiful, but what the love of Jeſus has put upon them. He is the Lord and giver of all their glory. How glorious then muſt he be? He is mine, ſays the believer, and my property in him makes him indeed glorious in mine eyes. Once I ſaw no beauty in him, that I ſhould deſire him; but now he is my beloved and my friend. I can ſee every thing truly lovely in my Lord and my God. Whatever elſe courts my heart appears to be but a ſhadow: the ſubſtance is my Jeſus. He endears himſelf daily to me by his numberleſs favours. I am always receiving out of his fulneſs, ſome bleſſing, which makes him the

centre of my happineſs. Every look of faith diſcovers in him ſome new excellency, and brings from him ſome freſh kindneſs, and thereby engages my heart ſtill more to its precious Saviour. And when I look forward to the glory to be revealed, when I ſhall ſee my Jeſus face to face, and ſhall be like him, and ſhall enjoy him, and in him all the bleſſings of the eternal Three for ever, O this is too big for preſent thought; yet it conſtrains me to give up my whole ſoul to this heavenly lover. Glorify him daily in me, thou faithful witneſs for Jeſus, and give me continual reaſon to love thee with the ſame undivided affection, wherewith thou haſt enabled me to love the Father and the Son.

The holy Spirit is Jehovah, a perſon in the ſelf-exiſtent Godhead, equal with the Father in every attribute. His office name is *Spirit*; the idea is taken from air, ſuch as we breathe, to denote his being the breather, or inſpirer of ſpiritual life. Every thing done by him in this character tends to holineſs, and therefore he is called the *holy* Spirit. His office in the covenant, as well as his co-equality with the Father and the Son, entitle him to equal worſhip, and to equal love. For he undertook to carry into execution the purpoſes of the Father's love in Jeſus. Their fulfilment depends entirely upon his grace. The Son has been incarnate; he has brought in everlaſting righteouſneſs, and made the atonement for ſin: the Father is ſatisfied with his finiſhed work, and has demonſtrated his

acceptance of it: the God-man is now upon the throne of glory with all power in heaven and earth. To this the holy Spirit bears witneſs. It is his divine office to apply the ſalvation of Jeſus, and to make it effectual. He does all *in* the heirs of promiſe. The Father gave them to the Son, the Son redeemed them, but they are in the common maſs of corruption, dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, till the Spirit of life enter into them. They feel not their guilt nor their danger, till he convince them. They are quite ignorant of God and of the things of God, till he make them wiſe unto ſalvation. They cannot believe in Jeſus, till the Spirit of faith enable them. They cannot rejoice in the Father's love, till the Comforter makes them ſenſible of it. They are without ſtrength, until they be ſtrengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man. They cannot go on in their chriſtian courſe, but by a conſtant ſupply of the Spirit. They cannot hold out to the end, but from his abiding with them for ever. So that he is the Lord and giver of life. He begins the good work, and he confirms it, until the day of Jeſus Chriſt. Every motion of ſpiritual life is from him, and all thoſe, whom he makes alive, he makes ſenſible of the debt which they owe him. He manifeſts his love to them, and thereby he engages their love to him. They experience, how great the love of the Spirit is. They are ſenſible of their obligations to him, and deſire to be thankful for them. Thus

their affections return to the proper object of love and worſhip. They receive daily the bleſſings of the Father's love through faith in the Son's ſalvation, by the applying power of the holy Spirit, and hereby they are reconciled to the firſt and great commandment; it is become the delight of their ſouls to love the Lord God.

Here conſider, O my ſoul, whether thou art acting upon the principle of gratitude to thy God. If thou art, then his yoke will be eaſy and his burden light. Thou wilt not go to duty in bondage, hoping to gain his love by the deſert of what thou doeſt, or fearing to be beaten with many ſtripes for not doing it well. Thy God whom thou ſerveſt is thy moſt loving friend, and tendereſt father. He loved thee in Jeſus, freely by grace, not by works done by thee, or to be done. Immanuel is thy Saviour: His love to thee is made up of miracles: No underſtanding of angels or of glorified ſpirits can conceive how great it is: for it paſſeth knowledge. Nevertheleſs, the holy Spirit has revealed it unto thee. He loves thee, as the Father and the Son do, with the ſame divine affection. Thy debt is equal, thy gratitude ſhould be the ſame to the bleſſed Trinity. In the ſenſe of thine infinite obligations thou art called upon to walk in the way of duty. Love to the perſon, whom thou art to ſerve, will make ſervice pleaſant. And thou doſt love thy God. He has given himſelf with every

covenant bleſſing to be thine, and theſe bleſſings are to be enjoyed in thy walk with him. With this faith look at duty. It is the expreſſion of gratitude to thy deareſt friend, and it is the way to enjoy his divine friendſhip. He requires it out of love to thee, and would have thee to do it out of love to him. O! how exalted is duty, when communion with God is carried on by it! He would have thee to keep cloſe to him, in order to maintain a ſenſe of his gracious preſence in thy heart, and ſo to walk with him as to have his love to thee confirmed at every ſtep; and therefore thou ſhouldſt ſeek to preſerve a conſtant nearneſs and holy fellowſhip with him in every thing thou doeſt. This is the will of thy God. May it be thine, O my ſoul. Study this glorious way of goſpel duty. Pray to be taught it better, and to go on in it more ſpiritually every day. Bring it into all thy affairs. In thy calling as well as in the means of grace, in temporal as well as in heavenly matters, ſet the Lord always before thee, and ſo live and act in every thing as to keep up communion with thy God and Father in Jeſus by the grace of the holy Spirit.

When God is thus become the dear object of thy happy heart, then every way wherein his love is to be enjoyed will become delightful. The time, the place, the means of meeting with him will be greatly deſired and much longed for. Thy heart cannot but

be, where thy treaſure is. Thou wilt want no ſpur to duty, no whip to drive thee to ordinances. It will be enough, that the Lord is there. As when he ſaid to David—ſeek ye my face—his heart replied—thy face, Lord, will I ſeek. His heart ſaid it. His affections were ſet upon God, and he was ready to ſeek, wherever God was to be found. No hunted hart ever panted more after the water-brooks, than his ſoul did after God. His hope in doing any thing was to have God's gracious preſence with him. And his happineſs in it was to have communion with God. This is goſpel duty. And what a glorious privilege is it! O that it may be my happy experience thus to meet God in all his ways, and to enjoy him in my daily walk. That thou mayeſt grow in this divine fellowſhip, conſider, O my ſoul, ſome of the duties of the firſt table, and learn to practiſe them upon goſpel principles. The firſt and chief is PRAYER, which conſiſts in keeping up daily converſe with thy God upon all occaſions. This is the breathing of the new-born ſoul. It wants to draw the air of heaven, and to live in its own proper element. There is a way opened for it unto the throne of glory, and the children of God may approach it with boldneſs: for it is a throne of grace, and he that ſitteth upon it loves to hear and to anſwer their petitions. He is *their* Father, "I go, ſays Jeſus, to my Father, and to your Father; my Father himſelf loveth

you; aſk what ye will of him in my name, he will do it. This is the beloved object of prayer—a reconciled Father in Jeſus—whoſe heart is full of tenderneſs to the complaints and miſeries of his family—his promiſes are the declarations of his pure love—a dependence upon his fulfilling them does honour to his truth and faithfulneſs, and always brings down the bleſſing. The holy Spirit abides with the children of God to teach them thus to pray in faith. He helps their infirmities in prayer, ſtrengthens their graces, and beſtows on them their comforts. He enables them to come with boldneſs, and to have acceſs with confidence. Whatever their Father has freely promiſed to give them in Jeſus, they will aſk in faith, nothing wavering: for they know his promiſes cannot fail. They find them daily fulfilled, whereby their holy familiarity with their Father increaſes. He draws near to them, and they draw nearer to him. This their mutual intercourſe may be interrupted, but it cannot be entirely broken off. God is always diſpoſed to hear, although the believer be not always able to pray rejoicing. It is ſtill his privilege, although he may not find any great delight in it; but if he continue to make conſtant uſe of his privilege his delight will return, and God will fulfil to him the gracious promiſe —I will make them joyful in my houſe of prayer.

Thus the child of God learns to love

prayer, yea, to pray without ceaſing. He lives under his Father's eye, and in a dependence on his Father's care for him night and day. And he has hereby as true and laſting fellowſhip with the things of God in his ſoul, as he has with the things of this world in his body.

O what an exalted privilege is this! How highly is prayer hereby ennobled! It is not a law duty to an abſolute God: but a gracious intercourſe with a covenant God—Not practiſed that he may love us: but becauſe he loves us—not to make us his children: but becauſe we are his children. It ſhould be performed always in this faith. If there be infirmities in it, ſuch as wandering, coldneſs, or the like, we are to remember that we are not heard for the goodneſs of our prayers, nor anſwered for the fervency of them. That which makes our perſons accepted obtains acceptance for our ſervices alſo. We and all we do are only accepted in the beloved: "For, through Jeſus Chriſt, we have an acceſs by one Spirit unto the Father," *Eph.* ii. 18. our acceſs is through Jeſus Chriſt. Truſting to his finiſhed ſalvation we enter into the preſence of the Father, and guided by the holy Spirit we pray in faith. Whatever we aſk in the Son's name, we know that we have the petitions which we deſired of him. This ſpiritualizes prayer, and puts glory upon it: becauſe there is heavenly fellowſhip with God in it, with the Father through the Son, by the one Spirit.

Theſe are ſome of the privileges of Chriſtian prayer. Thou goeſt, O my ſoul, to meet thy God in it—to converſe with thy Father—to call on him for the fulfilling of his promiſes made in Jeſus—to wait on him for his anſwers—and to give him his glory. O what bleſſed ſeaſons haſt thou enjoyed in this communion with thy God! How has he manifeſted his nearneſs to thee, and bounty towards thee! Haſt thou not found his heart open, his ears open, and his hands open to grant thee the requeſt of thy lips? And when thou haſt not found ſuch ſweet fellowſhip with thy God in prayer, yet thy dependence on his faithful word has been exerciſed and improved. Thou haſt left thy petitions with thy friend and advocate, truſting to that moſt glorious deſcription of him in *Rev.* viii. 3, 4. "And another angel came and ſtood at the altar, having a golden cenſer, and there was given unto him much incenſe that he ſhould offer it with the prayers of all ſaints upon the golden altar, which was before the throne. And the ſmoke of the incenſe which came with the prayers of the ſaints aſcended up before God out of the angel's hand." O thou great angel of the covenant thus preſent my prayers. They are nothing worth, but as perfumed with thy divine odours. Let them ever aſcend before God out of thy hand, with the ſmoke of the incenſe of thy ſacrifice and interceſſion. Bleſſed Spirit of prayer increaſe my faith, that I may truſt more to a prayer

hearing God and Father, who is always ready to grant every good thing promiſed to his children in Chriſt Jeſus. *Amen.*

PRAISE and prayer go together. The prayer of faith will afford continual matter for praiſe. The one is a dependence on God for every promiſed bleſſing, the other is the acknowledgment of his having beſtowed it. Innocent man had his heart in this ſweet work. It was his happineſs. Every breath in paradiſe was praiſe. The redeemed man has more reaſon. His obligations are far greater, than Adam was under, to his God—raiſed from his fall—ſaved from the guilt and miſery of it—choſen and called to this ſalvation by mere grace—through faith a partaker of it—an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Chriſt. O what motives are theſe to continual thankfulneſs! And theſe motives are effectual, when the holy Spirit diſcovers the things that are freely given to us of God. He makes us ſenſible of them and thankful for them: for he preſerves in the ſoul a bleſſed poverty of ſpirit, an humble abiding ſenſe of wants and unworthineſs, and thus he lays a ſure foundation for thankfulneſs. Every bleſſing is then received with a, Why me—what am I, and what is my Father's houſe, that God ſhould deal thus bountifully with me? I muſt refer it all to the praiſe of the glory of his own grace: bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed me with all ſpiritual bleſſings in hea-

venly things in Chriſt. All theſe bleſſings flow from the Father's love in his Son, and the holy Spirit has diſcovered to me that boundleſs ocean of love, and has often refreſhed me with its life-giving ſtreams. He has made known to me the good pleaſure of the Father's will, which he had purpoſed in himſelf, to chooſe me by his diſtinguiſhing grace to be one of his children, and through faith in Jeſus Chriſt I read my adoption, and take poſſeſſion of the inheritance of children. Mine experience of theſe bleſſings cannot be queſtioned, while I am receiving out of the fulneſs of Jeſus grace for grace. O how great is my debt! It is equal to the eternal Three; ſo ſhould my gratitude be. It is very meet, right, and my bounden duty, that I ſhould at all times, and in all places give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty everlaſting God: therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, I laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praiſing thee and ſaying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord, God of hoſts: heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord moſt high. *Amen.*

May ſuch as this, O my ſoul, be thy daily tribute of thanks. Conſider what thou oweſt to thy God—how great are his favors, how many, how endleſs—and beſtowed on the moſt unworthy. Review his goodneſs in giving thee being, and in preſerving it. Remember from how many dangers and pains he

has delivered thee; what health and creature comforts he has vouchſafed of his mere bounty; and what a monument of his long-ſuffering thou art. O what a miracle! that one, like thee, ſhould be out of hell. Then put to the account ſpiritual favours, what bleſſings thou haſt received from the Father's love in Jeſus; what bleſſings thou art entitled to in him, not only in time, but alſo in eternity. Caſt up the mighty ſum, and ſay, How much it is. Canſt thou tell the numbers thereof? No. Is it beyond the power of the greateſt arithmetician. If thou couldſt write a figure upon every atom in the creation, thou wouldſt want a new world, whereon to ſum up the vaſt account: for thy mercies reach to the heaven of heavens, and they are alſo everlaſting. Then conſider to whom thou art thus indebted. It is not to a juſtly offended God, who might have glorified all his perfections in puniſhing thee for thy ſins? Whereas in wonderful grace he has choſen and called thee to the adoption of Sons. He is thy Father. This is the ſpring of all thy mercies. In love he gave his Son to finiſh thy ſalvation. And his Spirit has brought thee to believe in it, and to enjoy it. This is the ſource of all thy praiſe. The object of thankſgiving is thy covenant God, who is related to thee in ſuch a bond of love, as will bring the under eternal obligations. Thou art therefore in all thy praiſe to remember thy relation to Father, Son, and Spirit, thy

debt to them for that moſt bleſſed relation, thy growing, ever growing debt. Praiſe will pay none of it. The ſaints in glory do but acknowledge it. While they are praiſing more, the ſum is increaſing. O my ſoul, beg of thy God to give thee grace, that thine acknowledgments may be in ſome meaſure like theirs. They are crying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God, giving glory for the Father's love in Jeſus, and for their experience of it by the eternal Spirit. May this ſubject be thine, more ſpiritual, more holy every day, till it be what theirs is, perfect and without intermiſſion.

Since it is thy privilege, O my ſoul, to pray to thy covenant God, and to praiſe him for covenant mercies, then thou wilt highly prize the holy SCRIPTURES; becauſe without them thou canſt not know what to pray for, nor what is indeed a mercy. Thy faith has nothing to ſtand upon, but the word of God, and nothing to praiſe him for, but mercies therein promiſed, and by believing received. O how dear then ſhould his word be to thee; how greatly ſtudied, how diligently heard, that by it thou mayeſt grow in every grace, which is needful for thy holy walk with God. It is the appointed means by which the holy Spirit acts. It is his great inſtrument in beginning and carrying on ſpiritual life. He opens the underſtanding to know the ſcriptures, he inclines the will and the affections to receive them in the love of the truth, and

he influences the whole man to ſubmit to live under the obedience of faith. Whatever ſtrength, victory, comfort, or bleſſing of any kind he beſtows, it comes by obeying the truth through the Spirit. So that thou canſt not go on in thy walk with God, but by conſtant and believing uſe of the ſcriptures. They ſhould be thy ſtudy night and day, heard and read carefully, mixed with faith, treaſured up in thy memory, received into thy heart, and brought into thy life, and all by the teaching of the holy Ghoſt, in order to thine enjoyment of the promiſed bleſſings of the Father's love through the Son's ſalvation. Thus the word will be the means of thy maintaining fellowſhip with the bleſſed Trinity. By mixing faith with it, thou wilt be conſtantly receiving from them covenant mercies: and ſo thou wilt go forward. Thy ſteps will be ordered aright according to the word, and thy way will be proſperous.

Conſider then, O my ſoul, whether thou art making this uſe of the Scriptures. Doſt thou find them the means of thy growth in divine knowledge, in faith and love? Do they really promote thy communion with God, and, on that account, are they daily more thy ſtudy, and thy delight? Never think of hearing or reading them without praying for the teaching of the holy Spirit, that they may be the means of keeping up fellowſhip with thy Father in Jeſus. For this end they were revealed, and if this end be

not anſwered, they profit thee nothing. Make it then thy conſtant practice—before hearing, to pray for a ſpiritual appetite, and as new born babes deſire the milk, ſo thou mayeſt hunger and thirſt for the good word of life—in hearing, beg of God, that thou mayeſt feed upon the word and digeſt it, and thine inward man may be nouriſhed up in the words of faith, and of good doctrine—after hearing, pray for a ſanctified memory to treaſure up for uſe, what thou haſt learnt, that as occaſion ſhall ſerve, it may be realized, and brought into practice, thy life and converſation being caſt into the mould of the word. With the ſame dependence on thy divine teacher read, as well as hear, the ſcriptures. Meditate on them. Convert about them, expecting to find them able to make thee wiſe unto ſalvation through faith, which is in Chriſt Jeſus, and as thy faith in him increaſes, able to bring in richer experience, of thy Father's love in him.

How ſweet is prayer, how delightful is praiſe, how bleſſed is hearing and reading the word, when theſe are the means of meeting and converſing with God! His preſence puts the higheſt honour upon them, and exalts duty in a royal privilege: for he is preſent as a Father with his children. O what a dignity is it to have God for our Father! What an happineſs to have free fellowſhip with him in this deareſt relation! In thy daily hearing and reading his word, obſerve, O my ſoul, what

is ſpoken of this holy fellowſhip; and ſeek to maintain it, and to improve it in every appointed way, particularly in keeping the command of thy dying Friend.

DO this in remembrance of me, When his diſciples meet together for this purpoſe, then place the whole dependence of thy heart upon thy crucified Saviour. Conſidering the infinite and everlaſting efficacy of the ſacrifice of his body and ſoul to take away ſin, draw near in faith to feaſt upon it: for his fleſh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed. Look well to the end of the Inſtitution. It was not only to remind thee of, but alſo to convey to thee, all the bleſſings of that one offering, which perfects for ever. It was to teach thee, that thy ſpiritual life, and every grace and comfort of it are as dependent upon Chriſt crucified, as the life of thy body is upon the meat and drink of this world. Thy life comes from his death. Thy life is nouriſhed by feeding upon Chriſt thy paſſover, who was ſacrificed for thee. He intended by the bread to point out unto thee his body, and by the wine his blood—by eating and drinking them, thy taking him and living upon him—by thy bodily ſupport received from them, the nouriſhment of thy ſoul, by eating his fleſh and drinking his blood. He would have thee to look through the ſigns to the things ſignified. Thou art not to reſt in the outward act, but to reſt in the promiſe in the word of God. Thy faith is not to be exer-

ciſed about the Lord's ſupper as a duty; but it is to be exerciſed upon his word; and what he has therein promiſed to make it, that thou art to expect in taking it. He appointed it to be the means of communicating with him, and of thy enjoying fellowſhip with him in his ſufferings. It is a ſpiritual believing act, in which thou art invited to partake of the paſchal lamb. It is the Lord's paſſover; and will certainly anſwer every purpoſe, for which he inſtituted it. He appointed it to be the means of ſafety from the deſtroyer, of deliverance from bondage, of free and full forgiveneſs of all ſins, of an happy paſſage through the red ſea, and of the everlaſting poſſeſſion of the promiſed inheritance. For theſe gracious purpoſes the Father's love gave his Son to be a lamb ſlain, and then a lamb feaſted on: and the holy Spirit makes it a feaſt indeed. It is to the believing receiver ſpiritually, whatever the paſſover was to the Jews on their coming out of Egypt. It is a communion with the bleſſed Trinity—with the Father for providing ſuch a banquet of love—with the Son for giving himſelf to be a lamb ſlain, and to be a ſpiritual repaſt to his people in earth and in heaven—with the holy Spirit for rendering the bread which is broken the communion of the body of Chriſt, and the cup of bleſſing to the communion of the blood of Chriſt. Communion ſignifies union with—the believer united to Chriſt—one with Chriſt—a member in his body, lives

in him, and on him, has communications of life, nouriſhment, ſtrength, comfort, &c. as the members have from their union with the head. He has a real inward fellowſhip with Jeſus, in his croſs and paſſion, in his reſurrection and aſcenſion, in his interceſſion, and ſitting at the right hand of the majeſty on high. He communicates now with Jeſus in all the bleſſings of his Father's love, and will communicate with him in all his Father's glory. O what a privilege is the Lord's Supper, when it is thus the means of communion with the Son, and with his Father through the Spirit! What an honour is it to be admitted to a feaſt inſtituted by the Lamb of God, and for the enjoyment of the love of God! What a bleſſing is it to ſit down now to the marriage ſupper of the Lamb, and to partake by faith of its ſpiritual realities and delights! There is nothing beyond this upon earth, and it has ſometimes been to the believing receiver, a foretaſte of heaven. Yes, bleſſed be God, it has been, even to thee, O my ſoul, unworthy as thou art of one crumb from the maſter's table, a feaſt of fat things, of wines kept, even of fat things, full of marrow, of wines kept and well refined. And when thou haſt not been ſo highly feaſted, yet thou haſt enjoyed ſolid communion. Partaking of the bread and wine according to the Lord's inſtitution, and depending on the Lord's promiſe, thou haſt been fed and nouriſhed at his table. The virtue of the

Spirit has been put forth in thy heart, and thou haſt as truly by faith, eat the fleſh, and drank the blood of the Son of man, as thou didſt eat the bread and drink the wine. It was, ſtrictly ſpeaking, a *communion:* being united to Chriſt, thou waſt a partaker of Chriſt, and hadſt fellowſhip with him in his life and death. O pray for more of this. Beg of the holy Spirit to increaſe thy communion with Jeſus, that thou mayeſt live more in him and on him, and thereby enjoy more of the love of thy heavenly Father. Plead his promiſe, and expect the fulfilling of it: "He that eateth my fleſh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him: As the living Father hath ſent me, and I live by the Father, ſo he that eateth me, even he ſhall live by me, *John* vi. 56, 57.

Viewing the duties of the firſt table in this light, how exalted are they, and ſpiritual! What a glory does it put upon them, that the believer has fellowſhip with the eternal Three, and in prayer and praiſe, in hearing and reading the word, and at the Lord's Supper he enjoys their covenant mercies, partaking of them now as really by faith, as ever he will by ſenſe in heaven! The law written and engraven in ſtones was glorious, but the law thus written upon his heart excelleth in glory. The two firſt tables of ſtone were broken, the other two are loſt: but no time ſhall deface the writing of the holy Spirit. The new heart turned in love to God, ſhall keep his

impreſſion for ever. He then ſhould reſt ſecurely upon this: becauſe he has undertaken to abide for ever with his own people, that the purpoſes of the Father's love, and the bleſſings of the Son's ſalvation may be always enjoyed by them. In remembrance of this great truth they keep the

LORD'S-DAY. They reſt on it from labour, declaring thereby their belief of the reſt, which the eternal Three have provided in Jeſus—a reſt in their ſouls—given without their labour and pains—ſecured to them by covenant—kept for them by almighty power—a ſabbath remaining for the people of God, into which they ſhall as certainly enter, as Jeſus their forerunner has entered. Sabbath ſignifies a day of reſt. It was ſet apart in memory of God's finiſhing the works of the firſt creation: and is obſerved now in memory of his finiſhing the works of the new creation. The end for which the world was made will be anſwered ſoon; and then it, and all the works therein ſhall be burnt up, and the place of them found no more: but the glorious work of the God-man ſhall endure for ever. In honour of this greateſt work of God we keep the Lord's-day. It is his Sabbath—a day eternally famous for his finiſhing the work of ſalvation, and entering into his reſt. "And we who have believed, ſays the apoſtle, do enter into reſt." We do enter into it now by faith, and we ſhare with him in his Sabbath. The atonement which he

made, the righteouſneſs which he wrought out, the victory which he obtained, the works which he perfected for ever, and the glory which he now inherits, we enjoy at preſent by believing, and enter upon the poſſeſſion of them. According to our faith, ſuch is our reſt. He that believes without doubt or wavering in the finiſhed ſalvation of Jeſus, he will have the peace of God ruling in his conſcience, he will experience the perfect love of God to him, which will make him reſt in his love to God, and then he will delight himſelf in the ways of God. This is the chriſtian Sabbath. It conſiſts in reſting upon Jeſus, and in depending upon his having finiſhed the works of redemption, and then in living upon them for our ſouls, as much as we do upon the works of creation for our bodies.

Sweet is the day of reſt, ſpent in this holy employment! Happy time! ſet apart for ſpiritual intercourſe with God, and conſecrated for keeping up fellowſhip with him in his fatherly love in Jeſus, and for receiving from him communications of his graces and bleſſings. Thrice happy day! in which this fellowſhip is kept up, and theſe graces and bleſſings are enjoyed. By this heavenly converſe the inward man is renewed with growing ſtrength: his faculties are enlarged; and their happineſs is increaſed. By which means he comes nearer to the ſpiritual reſt of the heavenly ſabbath. He calls it his delight,

holy of the Lord, honourable: becauſe the end of its inſtitution is anſwered to him, and he has on it happy communion with his God. When he draws near to God in his appointed ways, he finds God in them, and experiences his loving kindneſs, which is better than life itſelf. Bleſſed is the man, who is thus highly favoured. He enters within the veil into the holieſt by the blood of Jeſus, and finds a moſt loving Father upon a throne of grace. In every ſervice on the Lord's-day, he ſeeks a more intimate acquaintance and more ſpiritual fellowſhip with him. His very heart is engaged in this work. His ſoul thirſteth, and his very fleſh longeth to meet God, as he has met him in the ſanctuary. Therein he has found communications of grace, which have rendered the ordinances delightful indeed. He rejoices in hopes of meeting God, and of drawing near to him in prayer, of praiſing him ſtill more and more for his abundant mercies, of hearing the reviving ſound of goſpel grace, and of everlaſting love, and of receiving it not as the word of man, but as it is in truth the word of God, and of ſitting down to the banquet of heaven in communion with Chriſt crucified, through him partaking of the Father's love by the Spirit's influence. Bleſſed is he of the Lord, who is thus ſpiritual in ſabbath duties. By keeping up conſtant communion with God in them his bleſſedneſs is increaſing. He is already in poſſeſſion of the ſame things, which his

elder brethren are enjoying in heaven: and he will become more heavenly minded, while he maintains daily fellowſhip with the eternal Three in their covenant offices and bleſſings.

Conſider, O my ſoul, that theſe privileges are thine. Look well to thine improvement of them. Remember, thou art already, by believing, entered into reſt. Thy ſabbath is begun—a day, whoſe ſun ſhall never ſet—whoſe glory ſhall ſhine brighter for evermore. May thine enjoyment of this reſt, which is ſo glorious, be growing, until thou attain to the eternal ſabbath. O pray thy Lord to lift up the light of his countenance upon thee, to vouchſafe thee more of the love of his heart, and more of the bounty of his hand, more communion with him, and more communications from him, that thou mayeſt be growing up into Jeſus in all things, and be ready whenever he calls thee, to enter in with him into his perfect reſt.

Thus the firſt table duties are kept. By the teaching of the Spirit they become goſpel privileges. When he makes us new creatures in Chriſt Jeſus, then we take the Three in Jehovah to be our God. We know our Father in Chriſt, believe in him and love him. We will have no other Gods, but him. We give his honour to none, his name to none, our time and heart ſervice to none, but him. His love made known to us, engages our affections, and puts us upon ſeeking fellowſhip

with him in all appointed ways. Yea, the more we know of his perfect love to us, the more we are diſpoſed to love him, and to witneſs it in every thing we do. It becomes our ſtudy to walk before him in all well pleaſing: for we find it our happineſs. Whether we eat or drink, riſe up, or lie down to reſt, follow our worldly calling, or have any dealings with men, we endeavour to do all in faith. This makes the common things of life ſpiritual actions: becauſe in them we maintain intercourſe with God. This is, indeed, the heavenly temper of the children of the moſt High. They ſeek the preſence, and the bleſſings of their Father in Jeſus in all they do. They are taught to live in a ſimple dependence upon him. They acknowledge this dependence by looking up to him for every thing needful, and having received it by giving him all his glory. Then they are returned in heart and life to that God, from whom they had departed by unbelief.

Moſt bleſſed return! For now the old ſinful nature with its affections and luſts is pardoned, and thereby they have loſt their dominion. They have no right to exerciſe their tyranny any longer. The baſe ſelfiſh tempers, which rendered a man a plague to others, and often a burden to himſelf, are dethroned. The pardoning them in ſubduing them. Theſe always go together. They keep the underſtanding in darkneſs, but now it is light in the Lord. They blinded the conſcience and made

it inſenſible, but now it has ſeen its guilt, and has found peace with God. The heart was engaged in their ſervice, but now God has ſet up his throne in it, and ſweetly rules over the affections. Thus a free pardon brings a man into liberty. He ceaſeth to be a ſlave to his ſelfiſh tempers. A full pardon brings him full victory over them: for then he has the blood of Jeſus to cleanſe him from all ſin, and the Spirit of Jeſus to ſubdue all ſin. He is taken into the protection of Chriſt, and is his free man. None ſhall make him a ſlave. The Spirit of Chriſt rules in him, and makes him willing to live under the reign of grace: He dwells and abides with him to preſerve in his heart the love of God, and to produce in it the proper fruits of that love towards men. Thus he brings the ſinner to love the

DUTIES OF THE SECOND TABLE, which our Lord has ſummed up in one ſentence—"Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf." This love was loſt at the fall. Nothing is in mankind, by nature, but ſelfiſhneſs. He is a ſlave to diverſe luſts and pleaſures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. Every age has felt this malady, and complained of it. But no human means have been able to remedy it. Fine ſyſtems of ethics, and beautiful plans of natural religion have been tried; the aid of ſtrong reaſoning, aſſiſted with the forces of logic and metaphyſics, has been called in, but all in vain. Selfiſh tempers broke through their cobweb arguments, and ſported with their imaginary

bonds. Sometimes they poliſhed the outſide a little, and made a man a courtier: he looked and ſmiled, and ſeemed to love; but they did not reach his heart. This is the prerogative of the Lord God. He only, who made us creatures, can make us new creatures. And until we are new born of God, we have every thing in us oppoſite to brotherly love. But when we are born of the Spirit, then we are taught of him to love one another. He teaches it, and he enforces it. His leſſons are entirely practical. He not only informs the underſtanding, but alſo influences the affections. Having diſpoſed and enabled the heart to love God, he evidences the power of this divine love by its genuine fruits towards men. Theſe are inſeparable from their cauſe. Divine love is never without brotherly love: for ſo far as the love of God is felt, it produces loving tempers. It opens and enlarges the heart, as the warm beams of the ſun open and expand the flowers. The agency, which performs this, is almighty. The holy Spirit having begotten the new nature writes upon it the law of love. He keeps it willing to reſiſt, and makes it able to overcome, the ſelfiſh tempers of the old man. The apoſtle Peter has given us a delightful deſcription of the manner of the divine proceeding herein, 1 *Pet.* i. 21, 22, 23. "Chriſt was manifeſt in thoſe laſt times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raiſed him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your

faith and hope might be in God: ſeeing ye have purified your ſouls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, ſee that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: being born again, not of corruptible ſeed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." The chriſtians to whom he writes were partakers of the new birth, they were born again, not of corruptible ſeed, but of incorruptible. The holy Spirit was the author of their regeneration. The word of truth was the means which he made uſe of, they obeyed the truth through the Spirit. By believing it they were begotten again to a lively faith and hope in God. They evidenced their love to him by their unfeigned love of the brethren: they loved him that begat, and loved thoſe alſo that were begotten of him. From whence it appears, that the love of the brethren is not in the heart by nature, but is from the grace of the holy Spirit. He gives a new heart, and he ſheds abroad in it the love of God, which by his influence works mightily in oppoſing and overcoming our ſelfiſh tempers, and in eſtabliſhing the practice of ſecond table duties. Theſe ſpring from divine love. The holy Spirit joins them together, as the cauſe and the effect. He teaches no man to love God without teaching him alſo to love the brethren. He rains and ſhines upon the tree of love: under his cultivation it thrives: He brings

forth the ſweet and loving tempers of the new man, and they bear fruit abundantly. And bleſſed fruit it is: for God has great glory from it, and men much good. Love thinketh, ſpeaketh, and doeth no evil. Yea, it cannot be in the heart, without a deſire to do good to all men, eſpecially unto them that are of the houſhold of faith—to do good to their bodies and ſouls—to give honour to whom honour is due—to preſerve their lives—their property—their chaſtity—their good name—to bear no falſe witneſs, but always to ſpeak the truth of them—and to covet none of their bleſſings, either ſpiritual or temporal. This is morality—chriſtian morality—for it is learnt no where but in the ſchool of Chriſt. What his Spirit teaches, he enables alſo to perform, which moral perſuaſion cannot. He gives a will and a power to put off the ſelfiſh tempers of the old man, and to put on the loving graces of the new man: Theſe graces he preſerves by his almighty agency, and calls them into daily practice, through faith working by love—love to God from a ſenſe of his infinite goodneſs—and love to man for God's ſake. Thus the ſecond table duties, when done out of gratitude to God for his infinite mercies, help the believer on in his walk heavenwards, and are the means of maintaining conſtant fellowſhip with his God.

Is this, O my ſoul, thy happy experience? Examine carefully. What are thy tempers?

What is thy practice, with reſpect to loving thy neighbour as thyſelf? There is great complaint in the world of the want of brotherly love. And no wonder. It cannot be in them, who are wholly lovers of themſelves. But may not the ſame complaint be taken up of the houſehold and family of faith? Are not the children of the ſame Father deficient in brotherly love? Yes, they are. Too, too often they live below their privilege, and thereby bring great diſhonour upon God, and give great offence to men. Be humbled, O my ſoul, for thine own failing. Remember, what reaſon thou haſt to mourn for the infirmities of thy love—how barren it is in its proper fruits—how cold, when it ſhould be fervent—how polluted, when it ſhould be pure—how covetous when it ſhould be liberal. Haſt thou duly attended to the cauſe of this, and does it grieve thee to thy heart? Wouldſt thou be ſaved from ſelf-love, and increaſe in brotherly love, yet more and more? Since this is thy caſe, meditate carefully upon what is promiſed, and pray earneſtly for what is provided, for the ſubduing of thoſe tempers which are enemies to brotherly love, and which, if not ſubdued, will hinder thee from enjoying the love of God in thy walk with him.

Firſt, conſider thy ſtate. Thou art a pardoned ſinner, not under the law, but under grace—freely, fully ſaved from the guilt of all thy ſins. There is none to condemn,

God having juſtified thee. He ſees thee in his Son, waſhed thee in his blood, clothed in his righteouſneſs, and he embraces him and thee, the head and the members with the ſame affection.

Secondly, Conſider what is promiſed to them who are in Chriſt. Sin ſhall not have dominion over them. Pardoned ſin ſhall not reign. It cannot, for it is dethroned. Thou art therefore free from its bondage. Stand faſt in this liberty. Now the condemning power of ſin is taken out of thy conſcience, make uſe of the grace provided in Jeſus to deliver thine heart from the love of it, and thy converſation from the ſlaviſh ſervice of it. And remember this grace is almighty. Truſt in it, and thou ſhalt be ſaved from the tyranny of every ſin. Therefore,

Thirdly, read the great charter of grace, and mark to what glorious privileges thou art entitled. Being ſaved from the guilt of all ſin, and having a promiſe of being ſaved from the dominion of all ſin, as the Lord's free man, thou art by faith to claim thy birth-right and to enjoy it. Since Chriſt has given thee liberty, to whom ſhouldſt thou be a ſlave? Put off therefore the old man with his luſts and deeds: ſerve him no longer: it is a bleſſed part of redemption to be ſaved from his ſervice. God be thanked, that he may be put off, as a garment, which you have done with, and will put on no more. Away with it, it is filthy and abominable, al-

together. Yea, worſe ſtill: the plague is in it. Death and hell are in it: for the old man, ſinful nature, thus to be put off, is a body of ſin, and ſelfiſh tempers are his members, ſuch as anger, wrath, malice, lies, inordinate affection, evil concupiſcence, and covetouſneſs, which is idolatry. Theſe muſt be put off, or they will be always plotting and acting againſt brotherly love. Therefore the new man, renewed in the ſpirit of his mind, oppoſes them, and is mighty through God to mortify them. By the ſame power he puts on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindneſs, humbleneſs of mind, meekneſs, long-ſuffering, forgiveneſs of injuries, even as Chriſt forgave him, ſo he forgives: and unto all theſe graces he puts on love, which is the complete binding of them together. What an amiable character is here of the new man! He is created anew in Chriſt Jeſus, that he may exerciſe every kind and benevolent temper to the brethren. He is renewed in his heart to the unfeigned love of them; and is enabled to manifeſt it by every work and labour of love. And leaſt the vile tempers of the old man, ſtill in being, although dethroned, ſhould get dominion again, he is ſtrengthened mightily by the Spirit in the inner man to crucify them day by day. Since this is hard work, conſiſting of continual and ſevere ſelf-denial, no leſs then in cutting off right hand, and in plucking out right eye, luſts; for thine encouragement to perſevere, conſider,

Fourthly, that thou art *in* Chriſt—a member in his body—and in him thou haſt perfect and eternal redemption from the old man of ſin with his affections and luſts. The more this is believed, the more will the fruits of it appear. Faith in the abſolute and everlaſting victory of thy glorified head will animate thee as one of his members to reſiſt thy vanquiſhed foes, knowing thou art a partaker of his victory, and in his ſtrength, and to his glory, thou art fighting againſt them. In him thou haſt already conquered. In him thou ſhalt be more than a conqueror. Reckon thyſelf therefore to be dead indeed unto ſin, but alive unto God *in* Jeſus Chriſt thy Lord. And depend on him for the power of his death, that he may put it forth in thee, and mortify ſin, and for the power of his reſurrection to quicken thee to newneſs of life. Thy communion with him in his death and reſurrection will be in proportion to thy faith. If thou believeſt ſtedfaſtly, that thou art one with him, thou wilt find the effect of it in ſtedfaſt communion. Cleave then to him, as a branch in the vine. Planted together in the likeneſs of his death, thou wilt find virtue coming from him to crucify thy ſelfiſh tempers. Planted together in the likeneſs of his reſurrection, thou wilt find virtue coming from him to keep thee alive to God. To this fellowſhip with Jeſus thou art crucified. Thou haſt a right to communicate with him in his life and death. And whiſtl thou art enjoying

it by the faith of the Son of God, ſin ſhall have no more dominion over thee, than it has over him. This being thy glorious birthright, O my ſoul, put honour upon it. Enjoy it in the peace of thy conſcience, and in the love of thy heart. Read thy perfect redemption in Jeſus from every thing oppoſite to brotherly love, and improve this thy experience. As there is ſufficient grace promiſed and provided for thee, ſee thou make uſe of it and manifeſt it openly in thy tempers and in thy walk! For conſider,

Fifthly, Thy God and Father calls upon thee to give glory to him for his love to thee by exerciſing love toward the brethren: and thou art bound to this by a thouſand ties. Has he loved thee freely, doſt thou know it, and is the grateful ſenſe of it upon thy heart? How then can it be hid? It cannot; it will manifeſt itſelf, as light does. The Father has choſen thee in his Son, that he might communicate to thee of his goodneſs, and he has made thee a child of light, that thou mighteſt reflect the rays of his goodneſs upon others. Thou art to ſhew forth the praiſes of him that hath called thee out of darkneſs into his marvellous light. He hath called thee out of the deadneſs and blindneſs of thy natural ſtate, and hath enlightened thee with the light of life. How marvellous, that it ſhould ever ſhine upon thee! Marvellous indeed, that thou ſhouldſt ſhine, as a light, in the world! Admire this grace. Let others

admire it with thee, by ſeeing the reality, and by feeling the comfort of it. As the ſun not only enlightens, but alſo enlivens with his fruitful rays the face of the earth, and cheers every creature upon it; ſo let thy light ſhine before men. Give them clear proof of thy love to God by thy love to them: let them feel the bleſſed fruits of it, that they may ſee thy good works, and glorify thy Father who is in heaven. Love in thy heart will ſhew itſelf. It will communicate its gracious rays, and the Father of lights will have the praiſe. This ſhould be thine end, as it is his. He aims at his own glory in all his mercies: this aim ſhould be thine alſo. Thy Father calls upon thee to do good to others, that he may be glorified thereby. O what an high calling is thine! What an honour does God put upon thee. Thou art to bring him glory from men—from his own children; for their bowels are to be refreſhed by thee—and from others, that whereas they would ſpeak againſt thee as an evil doer, they may by thy good works which they ſhall behold, glorify God in the day of viſitation. Aim at this. Look at no motive to do good to men below the glory of God. And remember, thy doing it may be the means of his viſiting them, as he viſited thee, with his great ſalvation. O bleſſed fruit of brotherly love; may it be the happy effect of thy light ſhining before men. May God be daily honoured by it, and the comfort, and if it pleaſe him, the ſalvation

of his people be thereby promoted. Yea, Lord, this is my prayer. My heart ſays, *Amen.*

If thou findeſt it very difficult to live in the conſtant practice of brotherly love, meditate, O my ſoul, upon the goſpel motives for an increaſe of faith, and ſeek for the promiſed aſſiſtance to enable thee to love others as God hath loved thee. Above all, expect the effectual teaching of the holy Ghoſt. He only can write this delightful law upon the heart—the fair impreſſion of it is kept by his power and the exerciſe of it in thy tempers, and walk is the work of his grace. O pray then for a conſtant ſupply of the Spirit, that in all thy dealings with mankind it may appear thou haſt been with Jeſus. Set his moſt amiable life before their eyes. Give them reaſon to honour his beneficence, from thy copying it legibly after him. Let his love to thee be glorified from thy labour of love to them. Study to ſhew forth his praiſes, and go about doing good, as he did. And hereby convince the world, that Jeſus Chriſt was the greateſt moraliſt, and that his diſciples come the neareſt to the perfect pattern of their maſter; as a poet of our own obſerves—

> Talk they of *morals*? O thou bleeding love!
> Thou maker of new morals to mankind!
> The grand morality is love of thee.

The love of Jeſus teaches and enforces the the love of the brethren. The Spirit of Je-

ſus writes it upon the heart, and makes it practical in the life. And thus the two tables are joined together: and love to him that begat produces love to them that are begotten of him. When the happy believer is walking in this love to his Father, and to his family, then he will live in the obſervance of the duties, which relate to himſelf: for he was taught them, when he returned in his heart to God. And every ſtep he walks with God is in the practice of them.

The firſt temptation was an offer of independence—"Ye ſhall be as Gods"—man was drawn away by it, and fell from his high eſtate. Still this mother ſin is fruitful in fallen man. In great mercy there is a pardon provided, and in the way of receiving the pardon, there is a remedy for it. The infinite wiſdom of God ſo contrived the way of our recovery, that without Chriſt we can do nothing. His ſalvation undertaken and finiſhed for us, his ſalvation applied to us, the bleſſings of his ſalvation enjoyed by us in time, and in eternity, are the free gifts of his free grace. He is the author. He is the finiſher. He carries it on from firſt to laſt. All our ſufficiency is of him. We cannot without him, ſo much as think a good thought. Therefore his redeemed people are brought off from all truſt in any other object, and are taught to place their whole dependence for ſalvation, and for every thing

that accompanies it, upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

To this end the holy Spirit, the great convincer of ſin, had made them acquainted with themſelves. He had awakened them to a right knowledge of their ſtate, of which they had not been ſenſible before; and they found that they were fallen and apoſtate creatures. He ſhewed them ſin in its exceeding ſinfulneſs, and they taſted ſome of the bitter fruits of it: they felt in what a dreadful condition their departure from God had left them —ſo ignorant that they could not by any human means attain to the leaſt ſaving knowledge of God—ſo guilty, that let them do all they could, ſtill the condemning ſentence of the law ſtood out againſt them—ſo unholy, that ſoul and body were ſold under ſin, and ready to every unholy word and work—ſo utterly helpleſs, that it was impoſſible they ſhould of themſelves attain true happineſs, or eſcape deſerved miſery. The holy Spirit taught them theſe leſſons practically. His conviction carried demonſtration with it. He not only made them feel their guilt and their danger; but he alſo opened a way for pardon and ſafety. He led them to Jeſus, and in him they found every thing needful for their ſalvation—treaſured up for them by the free covenant love of the Father—ſecured to them by the fulfilling of all covenant conditions in the life and death of the God-man—and received by the faith of the operation of

the Holy Ghoſt: By whom they were made new creatures in Chriſt Jeſus---members under him, their head---united as intimately as the branches are to the vine---and living by and in and on him, every moment, and for every thing. Thus the glorifier of Jeſus teaches all his members to depend upon the fulneſs of their head, and he abides with them in order to keep them in this dependence. He teſtifies to them of Jeſus---"He is your whole ſalvation, your all in all; "you have not, you never will have, any "thing to glory in, but in the Lord---what-"ever good you receive comes from his grace "---whatever evil you eſcape, is from his "bleſſing---and if ever you have eternal life, "it will be the free gift of God in Chriſt Je-"ſus. Your bodies alſo are dependent on "him, as well as your ſouls: perſonal, fa-"mily, national mercies are his royal favours, "and beſtowed out of his ſovereign bounty." Thus he teaches believers. He humbles them, that they may exalt the Saviour. He makes them poor in ſpirit, that they may live upon his riches. He keeps them ſenſible of their own emptineſs, that they may be making conſtant uſe of the Saviour's fulneſs, and living in an abſolute dependence upon him for every thing. While they live thus by the faith of the Son of God, every high thought is brought into ſubjection to him. Pride is daily mortified. Self-complacency is abhorred. Self-admiration is abominable. Humi-

lity is become their clothing, and they cannot put it off; becauſe every moment they are making uſe of it. Sins, wants, miſeries, temptations, &c. are continually reminding them of their vileneſs, and of God's goodneſs. And this truth, enforced by the holy Spirit, makes them willing to learn of Jeſus to be meek and lowly. They become teachable ſcholars, and ſit very low at his feet, where they attain to true humility of heart. And this influences their whole behaviour. In a deep and abiding ſenſe of their entire ſinfulneſs and helpleſſneſs, they lothe themſelves before God, and walk humbly before men. They feel they are of themſelves nothing but ſin, and if left to themſelves can be nothing but miſery, therefore they put their whole truſt and confidence in a covenant God, and his free grace has from them all its glory.

What is thy knowledge, O my ſoul, and what is thine experience of this Chriſtian poverty of ſpirit? Art thou acquainted with it in the ground of thine heart, and is it in thy daily practice? Examine thyſelf, and with diligence: for it is a moſt bleſſed grace, advanced to high honour in the court of Jeſus. To it he has made many exceeding great and precious promiſes. O pray to him for this royal gift. Wait on thy divine prophet, and hear his leſſons. He teaches as man cannot. He recommends, he gives, the grace of humility. He makes his ſcholars truly humble

in heart. Obſerve his abaſing doctrine, and may all within thee bow to the power of it.

Obſerve, how he humbles the ſinner. He convinces him of his ſinful ſtate, of the corruption of his whole nature, and of the depravity of every faculty of ſoul and body. The ſinner is made to feel it, and to live under the ſenſe of it. And in order to faſten the conviction, clearer diſcoveries are daily made of this corruption: for it is a myſtery of iniquity. There is no tracing to the bottom its deep-laid devices and never-ceaſing workings. The heart is deceitful above all things, and deſperately wicked: who can know it? There is not a man upon earth who knows all that may be known of the exceeding ſinfulneſs of ſin, and of his own ſinfulneſs. When the Lord, who ſearcheth the heart, has laid open ſome of its infinite evil, he continues to diſcover more. Every day brings to light ſtrange workings of corruption. The convinced ſinner has deeper views of his helpleſſneſs, and of his unworthineſs. And after many vain legal trials, he at laſt finds it impoſſible for him to do any thing, for which God ſhould pardon him and ſave him. Thus he is laid low with his mouth in the duſt.—Behold, I am vile, filthy, and abominable altogether; I abhor myſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes.

Theſe are the humbling leſſons which the holy Spirit teaches. He convinces the ſinner, that there is neither help nor hope in himſelf,

and ſo leaves him nothing to truſt in, but the ſalvation provided in Jeſus by covenant love, and given freely by grace. And the manner of receiving this ſalvation is ſuch as cuts off all occaſion of boaſting: for faith is the only means appointed of God,---and faith is his gift---not beſtowed upon the worthy, but upon the ungodly---not for any merit in them, or for any terms or conditions which they have performed, or ever will perform, but by an act of abſolute ſovereignty, to the praiſe of the glory of his own grace. He will have mercy becauſe he will have mercy. O humbling conſideration! How low does it bring the ſinner! How muſt his proud heart be abaſed, while he feels himſelf a debtor for every thing good to the mere will and pleaſure of God! And ſo long as he enjoys thoſe good things, he is kept poor in ſpirit, becauſe he has none of them in himſelf. They are laid up in the fulneſs of Jeſus, are to be had from thence only by faith, and are received as the ſenſe of his wants leads the believer to make uſe of them. Living by faith is the death of ſelf-importance. Then the loftineſs of man is bowed down, the haughtineſs of man is made low, and the Lord alone is exalted.

Obſerve, O my ſoul, what an honour God has put upon this grace. "Before honour is humility." Whom God honours he humbles firſt. He giveth grace to the humble: becauſe the humble give him all his glory.

The higheſt throne which he has upon earth is in the humbleſt heart. To it he vouchſafes his conſtant preſence, and makes the greateſt communications of his love: "For thus ſaith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whoſe name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him alſo that is of a contrite and humble ſpirit, to revive the ſpirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." O what an honour is here promiſed to the humble! The greateſt they can have on this ſide of heaven. God will dwell with them; and what a bleſſing! and his temple ſhall be in the humble heart. The high and holy One paſſes by what is in higheſt eſteem among men. He ſtains the pride of human greatneſs and goodneſs. He does not vouchſafe to ſet up his throne with the princes, nor to give his honour to the learned, of the world. But he puts honour upon the contrite and humble. He condeſcends to viſit them; yea, he delights to dwell with them, and in them---the higheſt above all heavens in the loweſt hearts. There he communicates his choiceſt love and richeſt favours. O my God! beſtow upon me this grace, which in thy ſight is ſo precious. Humble me, that I may be revived with thy preſence, and refreſhed daily with thy love. Give me more humility, and fit me for nearer fellowſhip with thee. Bring down every high thought, and let me find it true,

that God reſiſteth the proud, but giveth more grace unto the humble.

Thus the true poverty of ſpirit is needful, not only to bring the ſinner to Chriſt, but alſo to preſerve the believer in communion with him: For ſo long as he walks by faith, every thing will tend to promote this communion. In the daily ſenſe of his wants, he will go to his bountiful Saviour for a ſupply. In the feeling of his miſery, he will depend on his loving Saviour for relief: whereby he will be led to more intercourſe with him. What he finds wrong in himſelf, will bring him to live more by faith, and as faith increaſes, ſo will his delight in God. He will grow more ſenſible of his weakneſs, and that will make him ſtronger in the Lord. He will know more of his own heart, which will humble him and keep him dependent on the grace of Jeſus. He will ſee reaſon not to lean to his own underſtanding, but ever to pray, Lord, guide me by thy good Spirit. Viewing ſpots and blemiſhes in his beſt doings, his triumph will be, "I will make mention of thy righteouſneſs, Lord Jeſus, even of thine ONLY." Thus every thing will humble him, and lead him to live more by faith; by which means he will get faſter hold of Jeſus, live in nearer fellowſhip, and be receiving out of his fulneſs grace for grace---two graces at once---the bleſſing needed-- and thankfulneſs for it. Hereby a ſweet intercourſe will be kept open. To the humble

God delights to give grace, and they delight to return him his glory. The more he gives, the more glory would they gladly return. And he does give more, and he receives it back again in thanks and praiſe. Bleſſed grace! by which this holy fellowſhip is maintained. Happy humility! by which the heart, being emptied of ſelf, is made capable of receiving the fulneſs which is of God. Then is the promiſe fulfilled---"Bleſſed are the poor in ſpirit, for their's is the kingdom of heaven"---it is their's now---not only in title, but alſo in poſſeſſion: for the kingdom of God is within them; and they are partakers at preſent of its bleſſings and glories, as truly, though not ſo perfectly, as they will be in heaven. Meditate, O my ſoul! upon this divine grace. Thou ſeeſt the neceſſity of it. O pray earneſtly for it, and for more of it. The great idol SELF muſt be dethroned, where God reigns. Thou canſt not walk with him, unleſs thou art humble in heart. And if thou haſt been walking with him, thou wilt be taught to ſtop, whenever thou beginneſt to look at ſelf with admiration. O beg of the Lord then to give thee the true goſpel poverty of ſpirit. It is to be in conſtant practice, and uſed for every thing: for thou ſeeſt how it keeps up fellowſhip with God, who makes the greateſt communications of himſelf to the humbleſt. And the reaſon is plain: becauſe they return him all his glory. If therefore thou wouldſt have

much grace in exerciſe, pray for much humility. O my God, whatever thou giveſt, give humility with it, that I may not ſeek ſelf in it, but thine honour, nor lay it out upon myſelf, but to thy glory. Meek and lowly Jeſus, make me like thyſelf: keep me learning of thee, till I am perfectly like thee. I would come always poor to thee, to receive of thy riches, and to receive with them an humble heart to praiſe thee for them. O let thy glory be mine end and aim. Let me and mine be thine---I humbled---thou exalted. Let thy graces and gifts bring thee in a conſtant revenue of praiſe. And may thine increaſing goodneſs be joined with a conſtant increaſe of humility, that my heart and all within me may bleſs and praiſe thy holy name, to-day and for ever. *Amen.* And

Let this appear in my whole behaviour to others. This is another bleſſed fruit of humility. It has an influence over the believer's intercourſe with mankind, and renders his tempers and manners loving and amiable. Pride was not made for man, and yet it is in all men, and is the chief parent of human woe. It ſets people above their place, and makes them think that they could ſupport the greateſt fortunes, and are able to manage the moſt difficult affairs. Others, as proud as they, deny them their fancied ſuperiority. Hence come wars and fightings, public and private. The ſweet grace of humility is ſent from heaven to re-

lieve thoſe diſtreſſes: for into whatever boſom it enters, it rentlers men kind to one another, tender-hearted, ready to every good word and work. Thus runs the divine exhortation: "Be ye kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another." This is heart-humility, which the holy Spirit requires, and which he beſtows. He brings his diſciples into humble ſubjection to God, and then to one another: which has the moſt happy effects upon public, ſocial, and private happineſs. How would theſe flouriſh, if all men were of a meek and quiet ſpirit! But there is none of this among the unconverted; and, alas! how little is there among believers! How often are they found in the proud ſpirit of the world! acting contrary to the lowly ſpirit of Jeſus. And yet it is not for want of precept, nor for want of promiſed help: but it is becauſe they are not walking by faith, as becometh the goſpel, nor out of love to God's glory ſtudying to recommend humility by their practice. Obſerve, O my ſoul, the remedy provided of God for the ſubduing of all ſelfiſh tempers, and pray that it may be effectual in thy life and converſation. "Do ye think that the ſcripture ſaith in vain, The ſpirit that dwelleth in us luſteth to envy? But God giveth more grace, wherefore he ſaith, God reſiſteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." This ſcripture cannot ſpeak in vain: for fallen man is certainly ſuch as he is

here deſcribed. The ſpirit that dwelleth in him, in his own nature, luſteth to envy---a paſſion made up of pride and diſcontent---offended with God---and diſpleaſed with the bleſſings which he beſtows upon men. It is an enemy to the love both of God and man, and tranſgreſſes the law of both tables. Pride brought it into heaven, and the fallen angels brought it into this world. Ever ſince it entered by ſin, natural corruption breaks out very much in envy. But God giveth more grace, to conquer this paſſion, than ſinful nature has to put it forth. He not only gives grace to pardon it, but alſo more grace to ſubdue it: ſo that envy loſes its dominion in the reign of grace. We cannot ſubdue, any more than we can pardon, envy, pride, and ſuch paſſions, but grace is almighty. Want ever ſo much, uſe ever ſo much, God has ſtill more for you. And he gives more, when the creature is humbled enough to take it out of the hands of his mercy. Thus he overcomes envy: "For he reſiſteth the proud," he is at open war with them, and they with him. Pride lifts up the creature againſt the Creator, and puts it upon ſeeking happineſs out of God: this is reſiſting his ſovereignty, attacking his providence, and oppoſing his law. He is concerned to pull ſuch rebels down, and he ſays their pride goeth before deſtruction: "But he giveth grace unto the humble"---he gives them grace to humble them, and being emptied, he delights to fill

them: for then they are diſpoſed to receive his grace, and to value it. Whatever God gives, the humble give it back again to him. They have the bleſſing, he has the praiſe: which is the juſt tribute due to him for his gifts. And he gives more grace where he can get more glory. Thus he ſubdues ſelf-conceit with its various proud workings. And as grace reigns over them, humility prevails; which has a friendly aſpect towards mankind. It keeps brotherly love in the heart, and tends mightily to the practice of every ſocial virtue. Humility ſuffereth long and is kind, humility envieth not; humility vaunteth not itſelf; is not puffed up; doth not behave itſelf unſeemly; ſeeketh not her own; is not eaſily provoked; thinketh no evil.

Conſider, O my ſoul, thoſe motives to an holy walk. Put them all together. Weigh them carefully, again and again. Do it faithfully, as in the preſence of God. And then try whether thou art walking in the way of duty, with a free ſpirit? Doſt thou proceed upon evangelical or upon legal principles? Doſt thou ſerve God for wages or for love? Examine thy heart. God looks chiefly at it. How is it in duty? Is thine obedience to juſtify thee in the leaſt, or does it ſpring from a ſenſe of thy being juſtified freely and fully? Art thou going about to eſtabliſh thine own righteouſneſs, or doſt thou ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of God? Art thou working from life, or for life? I

require thee to examine diligently, by the light of the word, and by the teaching of the holy ſpirit, what thy motives are: For there is no acceptable obedience, but what is done in faith: Whatſoever is not of faith is ſin. If thou art acting aright, the love of Chriſt is conſtraining thee to obedience. Thou art living under the influence of free grace. Thy conſcience is at peace with God. Thou haſt ſweet liberty to ſerve him without fear. Thy heart delights in his ſervice, and love makes his ways the joy of thy ſoul. Thou knoweſt what Jacob felt, when he ſerved ſeven years for Rachel, and they ſeemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her. A goſpel-ſpirit does the ſame to God ---love makes long ſervice ſhort---and hard ſervice eaſy. Nothing is pain which love does. And this is goſpel obedience. It is faith working by love, which refines duty into a grace; the commandments are exalted into privileges; the ordinances become happy means of fellowſhip with God. The believer meets God in them, and by free converſe he exerciſes and improves his love. He draws near to God, and God draws near to him in prayer, in praiſe, in hearing the word, at the Lord's ſupper, and in all ſabbath duties. In theſe ways God manifeſts his gracious preſence, and the believer rejoices in it. God communicates his graces, and the believer receives them with thankfulneſs. O my ſoul, pray before duty for

much of this communion with God in it. Seek it as the one great end of all duty. And if thou findeſt it, bleſs and praiſe the goodneſs of thy God. But ſtill ſeek to be more ſpiritual and evangelical, that the fruits of thy fellowſhip with God may appear in thy practice of the duties of the ſecond table. Love to God will manifeſt itſelf by love to men: For the holy ſpirit teaches all his diſciples to love one another, and he teaches effectually. He not only makes them underſtand what brotherly love is, but he alſo gives it. They become partakers of the grace, and are enabled to practiſe it. Thus he recommends and enforces his leſſons. He renders his ſcholars kind to one another, and tender-hearted. He puts forth his mighty power, and ſubdues the vile ſelfiſh tempers of the old man, and brings into uſe the benevolent tempers of the new man. While he carries on the gracious work, his diſciples grow more acquainted with themſelves, and learn heart-humility. He makes them feel their fallen ſtate, their ſinfulneſs, and their danger; in the ſenſe of their guilt and of their diſtance from God, they are willing to receive Chriſt for their whole ſalvation, and then to enjoy in him all the bleſſings of the Father's love in earth and heaven.

If thou findeſt it difficult, O my ſoul, to walk according to this rule: if to obey from love to God---to love men for God's ſake---and in the ſenſe of thine own vileneſs

to be humbled to the duſt---if theſe be hard leſſons, conſider what makes them ſo. Where is the difficulty? Is it not in thyſelf? And is it not chiefly in thy not uſing and not bringing into practice the principles advanced in the former chapters? Duty muſt be hard if the ſpring of obedience be not in motion; but if this act freely, then all will go on well.

Thy whole conduct through life depends upon the nature of the ſalvation of which thou art a partaker by grace. Conſider it attentively. The growing knowledge of it will engage thine affections to a willing obedience. Is it not a complete ſalvation---an abſolutely perfect work---yea, the greateſt work of God? becauſe all the reſt come from it, and lead to it. Is it not the infinitely wiſe contrivance of the eternal Three, for which everlaſting glory is to be given to every divine attribute? When every other work of God ſhall ceaſe, for this all heaven will to eternity be aſcribing honour, and bleſſing, and praiſe, to Father, Son, and Spirit. Attend, O my ſoul! to the ſcripture account of this ſalvation. Review the glory of it. Read again and again the revealed deſcriptions of it, till thy heart be ſatisfied, that this ſalvation is as perfect and complete as the Lord God almighty could make it. This is its character. Haſt thou ſtudied it well, and art thou well grounded and eſtabliſhed in the belief of it? Mind: this is the founda-

tion. If this totter, ſo will all the ſuper-ſtructure. O pray then, and be earneſt in prayer, that God would enlarge thy views of the infinitely glorious and everlaſtingly perfect ſalvation, which is in Chriſt Jeſus.

As thou groweſt more acquainted with it, thou wilt ſee leſs reaſon to be diſcouraged at the experience of what thou art in thyſelf. It is a ſalvation for ſinners---ſuch as thou art --and no way differing from thee. Only when they are called to the knowledge of the truth, they are acquainted with their fallen ſtate, are made ſenſible of their helpleſſneſs and of their miſery, but are made willing to caſt their ſouls, at God's command, upon the Lord Jeſus, truſting to the peace which he made by the blood of the croſs. And art not thou in the happy number of theſe redeemed ſinners? Doſt not thou believe the record which God hath given of his Son, and look upon it as thy lawful warrant---to make uſe of what is laid up in the fulneſs of Jeſus ---thine to take freely---thine to uſe fully---the more the better---thine for receiving, without any condition or any qualification? He loves to give, and without money or money's worth. He thinks himſelf honoured by the penſioners of his grace, who bring nothing to recommend themſelves but their ſins and miſeries, and yet truſt in his promiſed relief. Herein he glories. When they come to him believing, he beſtows his royal gifts upon every one of them: And ſo far as they be-

lieve, he withholds nothing that is needful for their holy walk in the way of duty.

Theſe are the principles which thou art to bring into practice. Carry them, O my ſoul, into every act of obedience. Go to prayer and every duty with this faith, that thou art in Chriſt, and in him a partaker of his finiſhed ſalvation. Then the Father's love to thee will be manifeſt, and thou wilt have ſweet fellowſhip with him in all thine approaches to the throne---Whatever thou undertakeſt, forget not this leading truth. If thou loſe ſight of it, thou wilt get into darkneſs: If thou art not influenced by it, thou wilt be brought into bondage. Upon this abſolutely perfect ſalvation thou art to live by faith upon earth, and thou wilt have nothing elſe to live upon by ſenſe in heaven. Truſting to the complete work of Jeſus, thou art to walk with thy God in time, as thou wilt follow the lamb in eternity, receiving all out of his fulneſs. O view him in this light, and it will have the happieſt effects upon thy daily walk. While thou art receiving from him grace for grace. thou wilt live with him in ſweet friendſhip, duty will be the way and means of enjoying the love of thy divine friend, and the more thou art in his company the more delightful will be the way of his commandments. Theſe are thy privileges. Read the promiſes concerning them. Call to mind what thy Father in Jeſus has engaged to give his children. Has he not provided grace

ſufficient for them? And is it not for his honour, as well as thy profit, that he ſhould give both the will and the power to walk humbly with him? O plead his promiſes. Bind him with his faithfulneſs. Be importunate with him, and pray without ceaſing. Let this be thy daily plea.

O my God, order my walk according to thy holy word. It is thy mind and will, that I ſhould love thee with all my heart and ſoul and mind and ſtrength, and my neighbour as myſelf: but I am not ſufficient for theſe things. There is no pure love in my ſoul by nature. Every affection in me is turned from the Creator to the creature. I am in bondage, a ſlave to luſt, ſold under ſin. I cannot love thee, infinitely lovely as thou art, until thou break my bonds aſunder, and ſet my ſoul at liberty. But being now redeemed from guilt and fear, I am become thy freeman; and for the unſpeakable redemption that is in Jeſus, thou wouldſt have me to ſerve thee. Bleſſed be thy holy name for requiring mine obedience upon this ſweet motive---"I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and out of the houſe of bondage." On this account obey me: becauſe I am the Lord your God, and I ſtand related to you, as your redeemer from ſlavery. O my gracious God and Father, I deſire upon this motive to keep thy commandments. I believe thou art my God in Jeſus, and through him I have

redemption from bondage to my ſins and enemies. With this free ſpirit would I always go to duty: but I cannot walk in this liberty, any more than I could at firſt attain it, without thy grace. O my God, let the ſpirit of adoption abide with me, that he may draw me nearer to thee in thy ways and ordinances, and I may in them enjoy more of thy preſence and of the light of thy countenance. Thee I ſeek in them. Thou art the end of all ways and means: and if they lead me not to thee, I go empty away. Gracious God, make thy commandments the joy of my heart, and let them be the means of keeping up holy intercourſe and happy fellowſhip with thee. This my heart pants after. Duty without this is nothing worth. I wait in thine appointed ways for the viſits of thy grace, hoping to grow in knowledge and faith, in hope and love. The communion which I have enjoyed has increaſed my longing. My ſoul is athirſt for God, praying to be more with thee, and more like thee. And is not this what thou requireſt, and what thou haſt promiſed to do for me? Grant me then, my gracious God, the prayer of my heart. In all my duties let me enjoy thy preſence and communications of thy love. Let me do them in faith, and with a ſingle eye to thy glory. Let me be thus ſpiritual and heavenly minded in them, that I may grow up into Chriſt Jeſus in all things.

And I deſire, holy Father, to grow in

love to thee, that I may manifeſt the fruits of it by my love to mankind. Pardon every ſelfiſh temper, which is oppoſite to the love of the brethren; and teach me to love them as thou haſt loved me. Whatever thou haſt promiſed, fulfil in me. Make me, O thou ſpirit of love, like the loving Jeſus. Give me his benevolent tempers, and help me to imitate his beneficent actions. Let his love to me be the pattern of my love to them. Since thou haſt in much mercy made me a child of light, O let me ſhine before men, that they may ſee and feel my good works, and may glorify thee for them. And the more thou doeſt in me and by me, humble me ſtill more, O my God. Keep me meek and lowly, always ready to give the glory of all my mercies to the Three in Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit, to whom be equal honour and praiſe for ever and ever. *Amen.*

CHAP. VII.

The believer goes on his way rejoicing in God.

HAPPY is the man, to whom it is given, on the behalf of Chriſt, to believe. He has the bleſſing of peace. He is reconciled to God, through faith in the blood of Jeſus; And he is freely juſtified, through faith in the righteouſneſs of Jeſus. The Father has accepted him in his beloved Son, and it is the joy of his ſoul to know it; therefore he loves

God, becauſe God firſt loved him. In the enjoyment of this love he finds his heaven begun. By the ſame Spirit, who manifeſted it and ſhed it abroad in his heart, he is kept ſeeking for more diſcoveries of it. In every appointed means he waits. As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, ſo panteth the ſoul after more of the preſence of God, and of the light of his loving countenance. Having a command---Seek ye my face---he obeys it from his heart: but his chief view in obedience is to behold the face of the Lord turned to him in love. He wants fellowſhip with God in duty, which highly ennobles and alſo endears it to him. He performs it in faith, and in a free ſpirit. He goes to it as a beloved child to a moſt loving parent: and his heavenly father meets him in it, receives him graciouſly, ſpeaks to his heart, and makes him ſenſible that he can deny him no manner of thing which is good. Hence the ways of duty become ways of pleaſantneſs. The farther he advances in them, and the more ſpiritual he grows in the performance of them, he finds clearer communications of his Father's grace and love, which ſtill increaſe his joy, and afford him ſurer earneſts, and happier foretaſtes of joy unſpeakable and full of glory.

As for the ungodly, it is not ſo with them. They are always ſeeking after joy. They are buſy, and weary themſelves in the purſuit of it, but they cannot find it. While

they are turned in heart from the Lord, they look downwards for it, where it is not. They expect it will ſpring out of the ground: and if they cannot diſcover it upon the ſurface, they will dig into the bowels of the earth for treaſures of hidden joy. But they diſquiet themſelves in vain. It is the ſovereign decree of the almighty, that nothing can make a ſinner truly happy but God in Chriſt: this they will not believe; and therefore they go from creature to creature, from object to object, enquiring, Where is the beſt joy to be found? Each promiſes them---it is in me. But each diſappoints them. And yet they go on, ſeeking it to-day in that very thing which deluded them yeſterday. Yea, their fooliſh hearts are willingly deluded. They love to be purſuing what it is impoſſible they ſhould attain. If after many trials they find the emptineſs of one creature-comfort, then they turn to another; and they will try the whole compaſs of beings and things, and will at laſt die in the trial, rather than ſeek for joy where it is holy, perfect, and everlaſting.

The believer is ſaved from this vain purſuit. He has been convinced of the inſufficiency of the creature to make him happy. He has ſeen an end of all perfection in it. He can ſay, with the royal preacher, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity"---all is changeable and imperfect, under the ſun; for the whole world lieth in wickedneſs and under the curſe.

Deeply ſenſible of his error in having ſought for joy in the way of deſtruction, he now ſeeks it in the living God. Here he comes to the ſupreme good, the ſpring-head of true joy: and the ſtreams which he receives from thence are always in proportion to his faith. If this be ſtrong, there is great joy in the ſoul. If this be weak, joy is at a low ebb. The effect is according to the cauſe which produces it. Joy in God is the effect of faith; according to the apoſtle's prayer--- "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy in believing." There is a preſent fulneſs of joy which we have by believing, as there is a future fulneſs of joy, which we ſhall have by ſenſe. So that joy riſes as believing does--- fulneſs of believing brings in ALL joy--- preſent enjoyment increaſing as the title to future is clear. The preſent is the divine pledge of the future, and is therefore given us, that by believing we may now rejoice in the Lord, and be glad in the God of our ſalvation.

From hence it appears, how neceſſary it is to the believer's walking in joy, that his underſtanding ſhould be clearly enlightened with the knowledge of the doctrines of grace, and that his heart ſhould be eſtabliſhed in the belief of them. Thou canſt not, O my ſoul, review them too much, nor meditate upon them too long: for they enter into the very eſſence of all true joy. Study the goſpel method of making reconciliation for iniquity,

which was the work of Immanuel, and of reconciling man to God, which is the work of the holy ſpirit. Has he done this in thee? Art thou reconciled to God? Is thy conſcience at peace, is thine heart happy through faith in the atonement and righteouſneſs of thy Saviour? Art thou ſatisfied of thy perfect acceptance in the beloved? Doſt thou therefore obey thy Father out of gratitude, and go to duty to meet him, and to have fellowſhip with him in his love, and to glorify him for it? Doſt thou find his preſence? Is he with thee in all means, and art thou ſeeking in them for nearer and more intimate communion with him? Since this is thy caſe, what return wilt thou make for ſuch inеſtimable favours? Surely thou wilt be glad in the Lord, and wilt rejoice in the God of thy ſalvation. Being at peace with him, and a partaker of his love---waiting for the eſtabliſhing of this peace and love in the way of obedience, and expecting more communion with thy God in the way of duty, who can have greater reaſon to rejoice? A ſaved ſinner, delivered by mere grace from wrath and hell, entitled to all ſpiritual bleſſings in Chriſt Jeſus, and already admitted to partake of them, may ſing and make melody in his heart all the way to heaven. And yet, alas! how often art thou, O my ſoul, in heavineſs, walking in diſtreſs, and caſt down, as if thy hope of rejoicing was in vain. And this is not thy caſe alone. It is too common.

How many of God's children ſpend their days in a mournful frame, and ſeem to forget their high calling and undoubted title to the fulneſs of joy! Meditate a little upon the ingratitude of this behaviour, and may the goſpel motives to rejoice in the Lord always be the means of ſaving thee from an unthankful and mournful temper.

Firſt obſerve, he requires it of thee. The ſcripture ſpeaks much of the holy joy of believers, and calls for it. They are in duty bound to be glad in their God, as much as to pray to him: For he is always beſtowing mercies upon them, which demand their everlaſting tribute of thanks: and they cannot be thankful without being joyful. How cloſely were theſe two united in the holy Pſalmiſt! None ever more famous for praiſing God, or for rejoicing in God. What he felt himſelf he often exhorts the redeemed to experience: "Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: for praiſe is comely for the upright: Light is ſown for the righteous, and gladneſs for the upright in heart: Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holineſs." Remember his righteouſneſs and holineſs, how great they are, and how great the grace is, which has found out a way to make you righteous and holy: Remember thoſe bleſſings with faith, and your hearts will be glad, and your mouths will praiſe God with joyful lips. What a ſenſe had the prophet of thoſe bleſſings, when he

broke forth into this acknowledgment? "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my ſoul ſhall be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with the garments of ſalvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteouſneſs, as a bridegroom decketh himſelf with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herſelf with her jewels." Theſe are the wedding garments, with which the heavenly bridegroom adorns his church, and in which he introduces her to the eternal banquet of love. Bleſſed are they who are called to the marriage-ſupper of the Lamb. Bleſſed are they indeed, for they are arrayed in royal robes: their ſouls are all glorious with the beauties of Immanuel, with his divine righteouſneſs and matchleſs graces. They have reaſon now to rejoice greatly: for they ſhall ſoon come to Sion with ſongs, and everlaſting joy upon their heads; they ſhall obtain joy and gladneſs, and ſorrow and ſighing ſhall flee away for ever. Theſe ſcriptures prove evidently, that believers are called upon to rejoice: it is their bounden duty to be glad in their God, for they are not living like his children, and making up their happineſs in their Father's love, unleſs they are rejoicing in his rich and everlaſting bleſſings: for,

Secondly, Joy ariſes from the ſenſe of ſome good. Joy in God ariſes from the ſenſe of his being our chief good, and of our intereſt in him. And this is the joy of faith: which is not in the leaſt like the light frothy joy of

the ſenſualiſt, nor the wanton mirth of the unthinking multitude. It is not drawn, as worldly joy is, from vain periſhing things, but from the word of God, which ſtandeth faſt for ever. It ſprings from the revelation of grace and mercy in Jeſus, and from giving credit to it. Whoever honours its teſtimony, as the truth of God, will be convinced, that he, truſting to the atonement of Jeſus, ſhall never periſh, and, truſting to the righteouſneſs of Jeſus, ſhall have everlaſting life. Hence come joy and peace in believing. The conſcience is reconciled to God, and is at peace. The heart is made ſenſible of the love of God, and rejoices in him. This was the experience of the ſweet ſinger of Iſrael, in the 33rd Pſalm: "Our heart ſhall rejoice in the Lord, BECAUSE we have truſted in his holy name." This is a good reaſon. Whoever truſts in God will certainly rejoice in God: for by truſting in his word, and by depending upon his faithfulneſs, he cannot be diſappointed of the good things which God has promiſed. We have an inſtance of this in a trembling deſpairing ſinner, who had drawn his dagger, and was plunging it into his heart. In that moment he heard of Jeſus. It was given him to feel his want of a Saviour—"Sirs," ſays he to Paul and Silas, "what muſt I do to be ſaved?" And they ſaid, "Believe *in the name of* the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved, and thy houſe." And they

preached unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his houſe. And he took them the ſame hour of the night, and waſhed their ſtripes, and was baptized, he and all his, ſtraightway. And when he had brought them into his houſe, he ſet meat before them, and REJOICED BELIEVING. O what a happy change was here, and made by believing! The ſelf-murderer forgets his bloody deſign, and drops his dagger. He hears of a pardon, and believes. His black deſpair gives way to ſweet peace in God. His miſery ends in the knowledge of a joyful ſalvation. How bleſſed are they that believe! God has pronounced them, and God will make them bleſſed. There is no miſery deſerved but by faith they are ſaved from it; and no good promiſed but by faith they may now enjoy it: they have therefore all the reaſon to rejoice that any perſon can have on this ſide of heaven. For,

Thirdly, This joy is diſtinguiſhed from the vain joy of the world, by its author. It is the gift of God. It is one of the graces of the Spirit of God. St. Paul ſays, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy," &c.—love to God, and then rejoicing in God. When the Spirit of adoption enters into any heart, he manifeſts, by believing, the love of the Father, and thereby excites it into holy joy. He comes to make the ſoul happy in its return to God. It is the very end for which he is ſent from the Father and the Son, and

therefore it is called the joy of the Holy Ghoſt. It is his fruit, produced by his influence, and kept by his power. It is like himſelf, of a ſpiritual and heavenly nature---a pure affection---in all goodneſs, and righteouſneſs, and truth. He refines it from creature-delight, and exalts it above ſenſual pleaſure: for it is the reſult of nearneſs to God, and the effect of fellowſhip with him: which is,

Fourthly, Another bleſſed ingredient in the joy of believers. It has God for its object. It is joy in God as their God, their ſupreme good, known, believed in, and enjoyed. The holy Spirit has conſecrated their hearts for fellowſhip with him. He has brought a free pardon for paſt apoſtacy, and full power to dethrone creature-love; and he abides in their hearts to ſubdue it. He enlightens their underſtandings to ſee the vanity of the creature and the fulneſs of God, and he enables them to reject every thing that promiſes them happineſs, if they cannot enjoy God in it. Thus he keeps their hearts chaſte and fixed upon God. Their joy becomes ſimple, as their faith is: for this looks at the finiſhed ſalvation, and reſting entirely upon it ſees God perfectly reconciled; thereby it lays a ſure foundation for their joy in God: becauſe they now know him by faith to be their God, and can ſee their intereſt in all the bleſſings of his love in Jeſus. This is the fountain-head of joy, from whence flow

rivers of pleaſure, for evermore. The nearer they live to the fountain-head, the more communion they have with God: their hearts become purer and holier, and their joys are more ſpiritual and heavenly.

This is the only remedy for the miſeries with which the world abounds. Men are uneaſy; ſeek for joy; and cannot find it: becauſe they ſeek where it is not. They go to broken ciſterns, which cannot hold it. They are diſappointed, and wonder; but ſtill go on, ſpending their days in this vain purſuit. They do not attain any true joy. It flies from them, and at laſt they lie down in ſorrow. What thanks then art thou bound, O my ſoul, to return unto thy God, who has ſaved thee from this deluſion! What a mercy is it, that thou haſt been led to the fountain of joy! O live near it, and from it derive all thy ſtreams. Seek them all in God, and ſeek them in faith upon the warrant of the divine promiſe. He has ſaid, "The meek ſhall increaſe their joy in the Lord"---they ſhall have it and increaſe it. The more meek and lowly thou art, the more wilt thou be joyful in God. Pray then for growing humility, that thou mayeſt experience the ſweetneſs of this ſcripture---"Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I ſay, rejoice"---there is always a matter of joy in the Lord. What a fulneſs did he find who teſtifies of it thus---"My joy ſhall be in the Lord---God is the gladneſs of my joy---all

my ſprings are in thee---for thou art my exceeding joy." Happy prince! All his ſprings came from God, and led him to God. He did not draw his happineſs from the brooks, but from the fountain. The brooks dry up, but the fountain cannot. He did not rejoice in his crown and dignity, in his victories and treaſures, or in any worldly good. He enjoyed God in them, who was the joy of his heart. He only valued the gifts for the ſake of the giver; for he made uſe of them by faith, and then they were the means of bringing him near to God, and of keeping up communion with God. Whoever does this is a great bleſſing. And every thing ſhould do this to a believer. While he lives like a child of God, he exerciſes his faith for ſpirituals and temporals; and his heavenly Father bleſſes him, according to his word, wherein he hath cauſed him to put his truſt, and gives him continual matter for joy and thankfulneſs.

This is the portion of the Lord's people. He has entailed it on them. It comes to them by inheritance. And thou art bound, O my ſoul, to make uſe of it. Thy duty and intereſt call upon thee to enjoy much of it. Thy gratitude for the exceeding great mercies of thy Father's love cannot be ſo properly ſhewn, as by rejoicing in him: for the thankful heart cannot but be joyful. It feels happy in God. My meditation of him, ſays a grateful ſoul, ſhall be ſweet; I will be

glad in the Lord. This a juſt tribute, which the Father expects, and which the holy Spirit enables his children to return him. "Bleſſed is the people that know the joyful ſound, they ſhall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance: IN THY NAME ſhall they rejoice all the day, and in thy righteouſneſs ſhall they be exalted." Theſe are great privileges, which God has promiſed and does beſtow upon his people. It is true they do not all alike rejoice with great joy; but they all ought. When their faith is weak their joy is little. But they have the ſame right to believe, and to rejoice in believing. There is the ſame proviſion made for the whole family and houſehold of faith. They are intereſted in the ſame covenant, have the ſame promiſes, and the ſame faithfulneſs to make them good. They have perfect ſecurity given them, that they may truſt and not be afraid. The people who know the joyful ſound of a free-grace ſalvation, have good reaſon to believe, without doubt or wavering. By ſuch a faith they will ſee God perfectly reconciled to them, and will behold the light of his countenance ſhining on them in love. A bleſſed ſight! To ſee it clearly is glory begun; to walk in it is glory increaſing. What is it but heaven, to rejoice all the day long? But then it muſt be IN THY NAME, in the incarnate word, in Jehovah Jeſus; by faith in whoſe righteouſneſs they ſhall be exalted, as high as a creature can be—being juſtified freely and fully,

they have acceſs into this perfect grace wherein they ſtand, and they rejoice in the hope of the glory of God: and not only ſo, but they rejoice in the way to glory, in tribulations alſo, knowing that all things are working together for their preſent, and for their eternal enjoyment of God.

For their encouragement thus to rejoice in the Lord, he has promiſed them, that the joy which he gives ſhall not be taken away, which is,

Fifthly, Another great privilege. True joy is the gift of God: is a grace of the Spirit of God. It has God for its author, and God for its object; and it has this prerogative annexed to it, that no one can deſtroy this gift of grace. The Lord Chriſt declares, that he will not ſuffer any creature to take away what he beſtows. What a rich cordial was this to his dejected apoſtles! They were mourning upon account of his leaving them, and were ſadly caſt down, as men without hope. But he revives their drooping hearts with a promiſe---"I will ſee you again, and your hearts ſhall rejoice, and your joy no one taketh from you." This is indeed ſtrong conſolation: for it is one of the ſtreams which maketh glad the city of God---a ſtream that never fails---it runs out of the ocean of free-grace, and none can ſtop its running back into it. Not as the world giveth give I unto you, ſays Jeſus. The world giveth empty joys; continueth them

by an uncertain tenure; and at laſt takes away all its gifts, and leaves its deluded votary to ſuffer the vengeance of eternal fire. Whereas Chriſt gives what is truly good, ſolid, and laſting. His gifts are without repentance. He is of one mind in continuing, as well as in giving: for his motives are in and of himſelf, and always the ſame. His own mere love, his free-grace, and the good pleaſure of his own will diſpoſe him to give and to continue his favours; and his one end is his own glory. Therefore he will not take away the joy which he has given, and he will ſuffer no one to take it away. He ſecures by his power what he gives by his love. Such is the believer's right to rejoice in the Lord always. His title is indefeaſible. God has freely given him in Chriſt all the good that can make him happy; and he enjoys it, and is happy, ſo far as he lives by faith. While he goes on from faith to faith, his joys increaſe. Growing faith brings him in a richer harveſt of joy. And he is commanded ſtill to proceed, until his joy be full; which is a

Sixth privilege, peculiar to joy in God. Other ſprings fail. They are often dry: And when they run the fulleſt, he that drinks of their water thirſts the more. But joy in God has a ſatisfying fulneſs. The fountain is always full, yea, is always running over; and all the ſtreams bring happy peace and holy joy. The more a man drinks thereof,

the more ſober and ſpiritual he becomes: for whatever flows out of this fountain is grace, ſanctifying grace; the more we partake of it we grow more like it. There is in it the divine property of conforming and aſſimilating us to itſelf; for it weakens the corruptions of nature, and ſtrengthens the faculties of the new man, and as theſe grow ſtronger, they cleave cloſer to God, and have more fellowſhip with him. By which means they partake more of his joy. A happy partaker of it declares---"In thy preſence is the fulneſs of joy," and therefore he prays---"Make me full of joy with thy countenance"---the preſence of God with me, and his loving countenance ſhining upon me, is the fulleſt joy upon earth. And this comes from the grace of the holy Spirit, and is received by faith. Our Lord ſays to his diſciples---"Theſe things have I ſpoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." His end in ſpeaking was to give them good reaſon to rejoice, and to continue rejoicing, and if they received what he ſpake with full aſſurance, as they ought to do, it would produce in them a fulneſs of joy. And this would be ſo much to his honour, and to their profit, that he commands them to aſk it of the Father in his name---"Aſk, and ye ſhall receive, that your joy may be full." To the ſame purpoſe the apoſtle John, treating of the perſon of God Incarnate, through whom we have fellowſhip with the Father in

all the bleſſings of his love, ſays, "Theſe things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." His deſign in writing was to lead them to nearer fellowſhip with the bleſſed Trinity, and to ſtir them up to ſeek in it their fulneſs of joy: and they have it full, who, ſatisfied of their title to the Father's bleſſings, are receiving them freely out of the Son's fulneſs by the grace of the Spirit. It becometh them well to rejoice: for in the ſame bleſſings there is fulneſs of joy for evermore, joy unſpeakable and full of glory.

Put all theſe conſiderations together, and then ſee, O my ſoul, what a rich proviſion thy God has made for the joy of thy heart. Admire and adore him for his great ſalvation, for delivering thee from ſin and ſorrow, and for the free gift of righteouſneſs and life eternal. To pardon, to juſtify, to glorify ſuch an one as thou art, O what divine and infinite grace! What wilt thou return him for manifeſting his love to thee, and for engaging thy love to him? How great is thy debt for admitting thee to fellowſhip with him, as thy God and Father, and for the gracious communications of his love to thee in Jeſus! What a ſubject is here before thee for delightful praiſe! Look at it in any true light, thou haſt reaſon to be glad with exceeding great joy. God, the infinite fountain of good, is thy God. He rejoices in thee, therefore thou ſhouldſt rejoice in him. He has loved thee freely, how canſt thou be ſen-

ſible of this without loving him? His love hath bleſſed thee with all ſpiritual bleſſings in Chriſt Jeſus; whilſt thou art receiving them out of his fulneſs, how canſt thou refuſe to thank him with joyful lips? He ſays that he rejoices over thee to do thee good; the belief of this ſhould fill thy heart with joy and gladneſs. Indeed, there is nothing in God but what ſhould be to thee matter of rejoicing. His faithfulneſs and juſtice are on thy ſide, as well as his never-failing compaſſion: for he is thy God, thy covenant God; he has given his Son for thee, and his Spirit to thee; by his grace thou haſt been called to enjoy fellowſhip with the Father and the Son, and to partake of their covenant-bleſſings. It is thy privilege to be improving this fellowſhip, and even upon earth to be taſting of the joys of heaven. May thy faith bring thee in a rich feaſt, yea, a fulneſs of joy till thy cup run over with the rivers of pleaſure, which are at God's right hand for evermore!

Remember, O my ſoul, it is thy duty and thy privilege thus to rejoice in God. It is thine intereſt and thy happineſs. Thy God requires it of thee, as the grateful acknowledgment of his favours: they are all of grace, meſtimably rich, and everlaſting. He would have thee to honour him for the gifts by rejoicing in the giver. Joy is the ſenſe of his goodneſs to thee; and canſt thou receive the preſent, and live in hopes of the eternal bleſſings of his goodneſs, and yet be without

a joyful ſenſe of them? Examine well, and try thyſelf. How is thy heart? Is it happy in God? Is it happy in nothing but God? Whatever a man puts his truſt in, from that he expects his happineſs. In what then doſt thou truſt? Certainly thou wilt ſay, my truſt is in the mercy of God for ever and ever. And ſhould not he be the only matter of thy joy, who is the only ground of thy faith? If he be, then why art thou ſo often caſt down, O my ſoul, and why art thou ſo diſquieted within me? How many dejections, what great ſorrows, and what frequent heavineſs doſt thou experience. From whence come they? Joy is ſown for thee. The ſower is the Son of man. The Father has promiſed it, and beſtowed it on thee for thy portion: thou haſt been called by grace, and the joy in believing is thy birth-right. What is the reaſon thou art not happy in thy God, and rejoicing in him always? Search diligently for the cauſe. Depend upon it, there is a great miſtake ſomewhere. The ſcriptures cannot be broken, which treat of continual joy in God. The promiſes cannot fail. The promiſer is faithful; and yet thou art not always a partaker of the promiſed grace. How is this? O try to come to the bottom of this error. May the Spirit of wiſdom lay it open to thee, and may thy ſorrow be turned into joy.

Perhaps thou art ſeeking for ſome reaſon to rejoice in thyſelf. This rejoicing is not

good, although it be very common. It has a bad motive: it comes from pride. The end is bad: it is to exalt and aggrandize SELF, which was man's ſin and ruin. It is forbidden in ſcripture.—He that rejoiceth, let him rejoice in the Lord. If thou couldſt find ſomething in thyſelf to be pleaſed with, thou wouldſt then rejoice in thy pride. Sorrow for not finding it may bring thee right; becauſe it may be the means of ſhewing thee that thou haſt nothing of thine own to look at with ſelf-complacency. What haſt thou that thou haſt not received? And if thou haſt received it, why wouldſt thou glory, as if thou hadſt not received it? Haſt thou any thing of thine own but ſin? Who gave thee grace, and made thee to differ from others? Was it not God? Did not all come from the good pleaſure of his own will? He ſaw nothing good in thee at firſt to move him to be gracious, and what he continues is to the praiſe of the glory of his own grace. If thou haſt loſt the ſight of theſe truths, no wonder thou ſhouldſt go mourning. God will not vouchſafe his joy to them who ſacrifice to their own net, and burn incenſe to their own drag. He humbles, and fills the humble with good things, but he ſendeth the rich empty away. The rich rob him of his glory, and he refuſes them his grace. Watch therefore over thy proud legal heart. Be jealous over it with a godly jealouſy; and intreat the holy Spirit to bring down every

high thought in it, that thou mayeſt exalt God, and he may exalt thee. Remember the promiſe—"The meek ſhall increaſe their joy in the Lord:" ſeek the fulfilling of this; for joy in him is the death of ſelf-ſeeking and ſelf-pleaſing. O beg of God then to keep thee meek and lowly, that thou mayeſt be willing to live upon Jeſus by faith, and to receive all the joy out of his fulneſs of joy.

Perhaps thou art mourning under a ſenſe of thy ſinful nature, and groaning under the burden of in-dwelling ſin, as holy Paul did, and as all the dear children of God do, when they are in their right mind. This is godly ſorrow, which worketh repentance not to be repented of. It is the true poverty of ſpirit, to which the Lord hath promiſed his bleſſing. Indeed, every one that has it is bleſſed, becauſe it is not only conſiſtent with the trueſt joy, but alſo is the very proper temper of mind in which it is preſerved and increaſed. They that ſow in tears ſhall reap in joy. Self-knowledge is the breaking-up of the fallow-ground, and is the ploughing and harrowing of it, thereby making it fit for the good ſeed, and to receive the enlivening influence of the heavens. The more any man knows of himſelf, the greater reaſon will he have to ſeek the harveſt of his joys in God, and ſeeking by faith he will find them. If he be in the deepeſt humiliation, he will be then beſt diſpoſed to rejoice in God. This holy joy generally riſes higheſt, when ſelf is

loweſt: as the higheſt tide is always after the loweſt ebb. Remember this, O my ſoul, in the moſt abaſing views of thy fallen nature, and it will lead thee to ſeek, and in believing to find, that in God which thou haſt not in thyſelf. The empty, and none but the empty, may be filled with his joy. Let every diſcovery of thine emptineſs lead thee to truſt more in the ſalvation of God, and to enjoy more of its bleſſings: and then thou mayeſt be, with Paul, always ſorrowful, yet always rejoicing. Sorrow for ſelf is the greateſt friend to joy in God. Self-lothing is accompanied with the ſweeteſt delight in God. May the apoſtle's experience herein be thine: "We are of the circumciſion, who worſhip God in the ſpirit, and rejoice in Chriſt Jeſus, and have no confidence in the fleſh." O pray for the ſame grace, and thou wilt find that the leſs confidence there is in the fleſh, the more rejoicing there will be in Chriſt Jeſus.

Perhaps thou haſt been tempted to ſeek for joy in ſome creature-comfort, and haſt not received it as the gift of God, nor enjoyed it by faith, nor returned him his glory. Thou waſt looking below God for happineſs, and expecting it from ſome other object. The world had herein enſnared thy heart. There is not a greater enemy to the children of God: becauſe it has objects ſuited to their ſenſes, and capable of gratifying them: by which the world is always trying to engage their affections, and always ſucceeds, when they are

not living by the faith of the Son of God: for this is the only victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. See, whether thy ſorrow did not ſpring from ſome worldly diſappointment? Thou hadſt dropped thy ſhield, and waſt falling aſleep in Dalilah's lap; but awaking didſt find the pleaſure turned into pain. This pain may be very profitable. It ſhould convince thee of thy dreadful miſtake in leaving God for the world, and ſhould ſtop up thy way for the future. Now thou ſeeſt the need of being cautioned--Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world; for all things out of Chriſt are under the curſe. There can be no bleſſedneſs in them. The whole world lieth in wickedneſs; it cannot make thee happy any more than hell can. But it is thy privilege to be delivered from this preſent evil world, and to be ſaved from the love of it. This is a bleſſed part of thy ſalvation. Expect it by faith. The victory is obtained; ſee thy ſhare in it. "I have overcome the world," ſays Jeſus. Almighty Lord, overcome it in me, as thou haſt overcome it for me.

But remember, O my ſoul! whatever be the real cauſe of thy ſorrowing, there is joy in God, and for thee: becauſe he is thy God, in whom there is nothing to make thee ſorrowful, but every thing which can poſſibly give thee true joy. The bleſſed Trinity are in covenant for thee and for thy ſalvation. And it is thy bounden duty, truſting to the finiſhed

work of the Son, to rejoice in the love of the Father. In the peace of thy conſcience, and in the love of thy heart, thou art required to have fellowſhip with the Father and Son, and to be always giving thanks to the holy Spirit for this fellowſhip. Every enjoyment of their covenant-bleſſings on earth is a foretaſte of heaven, and a pledge of joy unſpeakable. What thou haſt now by faith, thou ſhalt certainly have in everlaſting poſſeſſion: for there is a ſure foundation laid in the covenant for thee to build thy hopes upon of rejoicing evermore. Thy Father has choſen thee, and accepted thee in his Son. He has ſet his heart upon doing thee good, and he changeth not. His loving-kindneſs is like himſelf. He has drawn thee by his Spirit to believe in his love, and he has promiſed to love thee unto the end. He has freely given thee all ſpiritual bleſſings in Chriſt Jeſus, and he reſerves the full enjoyment of them for heaven. Nothing can rob thee of them: becauſe he keeps them by his power for thee, and thee for them. How ſhould this help to fill up the meaſure of thy joys! The Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort is thine, with all that his love can do to make thee happy. What canſt thou want but more faith? The Lord increaſe it, that thy heart and converſation may be more with him. As thine affections are ſet more on things above, the temptations to the love of the things below will be weakened. The

ſweetneſs of heavenly communion will deaden thee to the charms of the world: yea, the world will be to thee as nothing, while God is ALL. And is he not all in all to thee? Conſider his nature, his perſonality, his covenant, his works, his graces, and his bleſſings: view them in their greatneſs and goodneſs; thou haſt an intereſt in them all. His wiſdom contrives for thee; his providence watches over thee; his love waits to be gracious to thee; his holineſs and juſtice and truth are thy friends; all his attributes have engaged his power to bring thee to glory. The perfect ſalvation of Jeſus is thine. His Father is thy Father in him, and has nothing in his heart but love to thee: the holy Spirit has manifeſted it to thee in believing, to be a perfect, unchangeable, and everlaſting love. Whatever the Godhead has promiſed to give of happineſs is promiſed to thee: and thou doſt believe it, although thou art ſometimes in heavineſs, through manifold temptations. But even then there is joy laid up for thee in God. Joy enough in the fountain. It is always full: only thy faith draws out of it ſparingly. Enough in God to turn thy ſorrow into joy, if faith did its perfect work. O for more faith, that thou mayeſt have more joy in believing.

From whatever cauſe then, O my ſoul! thy ſorrow aroſe, it certainly did not ſpring from any thing which faith diſcovered to be in God. Be aſſured of this: and learn to in-

prove thy ſorrow about other things, ſo as to ſee thy need of truſting more, and of rejoicing more, in God. If thy ſorrow be lawful, coming from a ſight and ſenſe of thy ſinfulneſs, there is good reaſon thou ſhouldſt abhor thyſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes. But this is alſo a good reaſon for joy in thy God: becauſe the Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and ſaveth ſuch as be of a contrite ſpirit. He gives to them the knowledge of ſalvation, and makes them glad with the joy of his countenance. Thus he delivers them from their ſins and ſorrows. He continues his loving-kindneſs: ſurely his goodneſs and mercy ſhall follow them all the days of their lives. When they are under temptations to ſeek for joy in other things, he hedges up their way, that they cannot attain the expected good; or if they do, he embitters the enjoyment, and will not let them find any thing in the creature but vanity and vexation: by which means he would teach them to derive all their joys from him, and from nothing but him. Wait, O my ſoul, and read and hear and pray; be diligent in all means for thine improvement in this divine leſſon. Seek the preſence of God, wherever thou art. Expect his bleſſing upon all that thou doeſt. Account his love thy chief happineſs, and be ſure nothing can make thee happy in which thou canſt not enjoy his love. If riches increaſe, the world ſmiles, health be granted thee, relations are kind, and all things go well, ſet not

thy heart upon them. Look at the bountiful hand which gives, and depend on the grace which ſanctifies thoſe things. They are not worth having but as they come from and lead to God, and ſo may be ſpiritually improved. If thou canſt live by faith, and enjoy God in them, then they are real bleſſings: for then thou wilt receive them as his gifts, and uſe them to his praiſe; thou wilt eye his goodneſs in them, and admire him for them: and while he continues them, thou wilt be dependent on his grace to keep thy heart from idolatry, that thou mayeſt love the gifts only for the ſake of the giver. Whatever thou art going to do, aſk thyſelf, How can this be the means of my rejoicing in God? if it cannot, avoid it. If it come with all the world's flatteries, and make thee the greateſt offers of joy, fly from it: there is deadly poiſon under its gilded outſide. Lay it down as an invariable rule of thy walk, that nothing can do thee good but what thou canſt enjoy God in. He is the only ſource of good; and every thing is to thee what he makes it: not what it is in itſelf; as ſuch, all is vanity: but it is good when God makes it ſo. True joy is from him and in him. It is the gift of his grace, and does not ſtop at any of the ſtreams, but goes up to the fountain-head, from whence they flow, and there finds its comforts. O my God, teach me thus to ſeek my joys in thee, and to make thee my crown of rejoicing.

For thine encouragement, conſider, O my

ſoul; what he did to the taavellers gone before thee in the way to Sion: how he comforted them, and made them glad with the joy of his countenance. He led them indeed through the valley of Baca (of mourning) the only high-way to the kingdom; but they found a well in it, a fountain of living waters: they went on ſorrowing for their departure from God, but were made glad at their hearts in being brought back by his grace: therefore they wept rejoicing. Happy mourners! And haſt thou not the ſame reaſon as they had to ſorrow for thyſelf, and yet to be exceeding glad in God? Is not this alſo the caſe with all thy fellow-travellers now upon the road? Their hearts are with God. He is their portion. His heaven is their home. They would not make up their happineſs in the accommodations by the way, but in God, their treaſure, their ſupreme good, and their everlaſting joy. Neither would they be ſtopped by the inconveniences which they may meet with: theſe, improved by faith, will tend to make them long more to be at home: for theſe will lead them to feel more of the true joy there is in God, and will thereby inſpire them with higher ſtrains of praiſe and thankfulneſs. So that every thing they meet with on the road, will be ſanctified to them, and will diſpoſe them to make melody in their hearts unto the Lord. Their Father and our Father, out of the riches of his grace, has not only given them matter of thanks, but has alſo provided

the very words to be uſed by them. Many a weary traveller has found them a rich cordial. His ſpirits have been raiſed, his ſoul and all within made happy, while he was ſinging the ſweet and heavenly hymn. The goſpel prophet, who had ſeen the glory of Immanuel, and who was the honoured penman of this divine poem, has left us a direction, when any one has a right to ſing it, and to make it his own, *Iſa.* xii. 1. *And in that day thou ſhalt ſay.* By looking at the context, the time here mentioned appears to be the day of the Lord's power, when the Spirit of life enters into the ſinner, and he is quickened from a death in treſpaſſes and ſins. A happy, eternally happy day. The ſame Spirit will be his comforter, will bring him to the knowledge of his ſalvation, through faith in the glorioufly complete work of Immanuel, by which he ſhall find himſelf freed from guilt and fear, and in Jeſus made a partaker of grace and glory. Then the joy of the Holy Ghoſt is felt in his ſoul, and his heart is in tune to bleſs the Lord his God. *---O Lord, I will praiſe thee, though thou waſt angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedſt me. Behold, God is my ſalvation; I will truſt and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my ſtrength and my ſong, he alſo has become my ſalvation: therefore with joy ſhall ye draw water out of the wells of ſalvation.* Theſe wells are the fountains of grace, from which the hea-

venly travellers draw their holy comforts, and with which refreſhed they go on from ſtrength to ſtrength, praiſing Jehovah, and aſcribing to him all the glory of their ſalvation. He was angry with them, and juſtly. The fire of his wrath might have burned to the loweſt hell; and his law, his juſtice, his holineſs, and his truth would have been glorified for ever in their deſtruction. But admired be his mercy, adored be his ſovereign grace, he himſelf found out a way to magnify every divine attribute in their ſalvation. This was the wonderful contrivance of the Three in covenant. The Father accepted his coequal Son in the place of his people, and his obedience unto death in their ſtead; he is now perfectly reconciled to them in Jeſus; his anger is turned away from them. And when it is given unto them to know it, and they receive the comfort of it, when they have joy and peace in believing, oh what a day of light and glory then breaks in upon their ſouls---a day ſometimes clouded with the riſing miſts and vapours of the body of ſin, but often ſo bright and ſerene, that the warm beams of the Sun of righteouſneſs ſhine directly into their hearts. Theſe are times of great refreſhing from the preſence of the Lord. The communications of his love are then felt with pure delight; and the ſoul is made ſenſible that it is in Jeſus a happy partaker of the fulneſs of joy. The man cannot contain his mighty bliſs; but breaks

out aloud into thanks, and calls upon the by-ſtanders to admire the marvellous goodneſs of God. *Behold*, ſee here a miracle of grace---*God is my ſalvation*---wonder with me at the exceeding riches of this love---Why me? What am I, that the moſt high God ſhould be my Saviour? I am ſure he never ſet his love upon one more unworthy, nor plucked any brand out of the burning, that was fitter fuel for hell-fire. O help me then, angels and men, to praiſe and adore that infinite mercy, which contrived, wrought out, and has now applied to me, this ſalvation, with all its bleſſings. My debt increaſes, and I want to praiſe him more; for in that unſpeakable gift of his Son he gave me all things, and he has now given me faith, and has put me into poſſeſſion. I have his word for it, and I believe it---a word of infallible truth, confirmed by promiſe, ratified by the covenant oath of the bleſſed Trinity. Theſe engagements cannot be broken, therefore *I will truſt and not be afraid.* On the part of the divine covenantors all is ſure. They have given me the fulleſt ſecurity that can be, and I may take the comfort of it. They will never leave me nor forſake me, and my faith ſhall not fail. Bleſſed promiſe! I ſhall be kept by the power of God, through faith unto ſalvation. Glory be to *the Lord Jehovah, who is my ſtrength*---his almighty arm holds me up, and therefore *he is my ſong*---the ſame arm will carry me ſafe to the

end, therefore my heart rejoiceth in him, and with my ſong will I praiſe him. I will make my boaſt of his ſtrength; all the day long will I be telling of his ſalvation. How can I mention too often theſe infinite mercies of my God? I love to dwell on the delightful theme. It warms my heart, it inflames mine affections, and raiſes my ſoul to heaven. My joys are all in this one---*He alſo has become my ſalvation.* He is my preſent ſalvation: for he has opened the fountain, and has opened my heart to receive the life-giving ſtreams. How can I but bleſs and adore his holy name, while I am *with joy drawing water out of the wells of ſalvation?*

O ye bleſſed of the Lord, who have received the ſame ſalvation out of the infinite fountain of divine grace, aſſiſt me to praiſe. Your rejoicing with me will increaſe my joys, and improve my thankfulneſs. So it follows in the prophet---*In that day ſhall* YE *ſay*---YE; not one only, as before; but the many partakers of the ſame mercies will ſing in chorus. They will join in ſocial worſhip, and with one heart unite in the common tribute of praiſe. *Praiſe ye the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth. Cry out and ſhout, thou inhabitant of Sion: for great is the holy One of Iſrael in the midſt of thee.* Great he

is indeed; infinitely---everlaſtingly great in himſelf---and to be admired for his excellent greatneſs in ſaving ſinners. This is his greateſt work, and it demands of them their higheſt praiſe: and they are glad to give it him. Happy are they now, when humble and poor in ſpirit they can exalt their Saviour God: but who can tell how happy they ſhall be when he ſhall exalt them, and make them partakers of his own happineſs? Eternal ſalvation will demand the tribute of their eternal praiſe; and they will be moſt bleſſedly employed in paying it, when they ſhall return to Sion with ſongs, and everlaſting joy ſhall be upon their heads. Crowned heads may well ſing: for their coronation-day will laſt for ever; and the king of kings will put ſuch honour upon his royal friends, that all heaven will ring with his praiſes. They will with one heart and one voice adore God the Lamb, whoſe gracious hand wiped away all tears from their eyes, and made ſorrow and ſighing flee away for ever; and who gave them his joy and gladneſs, ſuch as are, even in heaven, inexpreſſible, and will be to eternity full of glory.

O my God, accept of my poor mite. I deſire to join all the redeemed on earth and in heaven in bleſſing and praiſing thee at all times. I would give thee praiſe continually with my heart and with my mouth. I would rejoice in thee, and in nothing but thee: for

thou art my God, my ſupreme good, and mine everlaſting portion. Let me then, for thy mercy's ſake, glory in praiſing thee henceforth, and for ever. I aſcribe it to thee now with a glad heart, rejoicing in hope, that my praiſe will be better ere long, and never-ceaſing. Thou art worthy of all that angels and men can pay. To thee, holy Father, with the Son and Spirit, the Three in one Jehovah, be equal and endleſs praiſe. To this I give my hearty *Amen.*

CHAP. VIII.

The believer walks humbly with God, bearing his croſs.

THE happy believer is now advanced a great way in his journey. He has been brought to the ſaving knowledge of God---has received faith in his reconciled God in Jeſus---has been taught by the Spirit to love his God---and has found the bleſſedneſs of holy communion with him in the way of obedience and duty, which makes him go on rejoicing; then it is become fit and proper that his faith and love ſhould be tried. He muſt expect it. It is to the honour of God, to the good of others, and to the eſtabliſhing of thoſe graces, that proof ſhould be made of them, and that they ſhould be put, like gold, into the furnace. This is only a refiner's fire. If the furnace

be very hot, one ſeven times more than it was wont to be heated, the gold will loſe nothing. Sterling grace is purer and brighter for every fiery trial. Its enemies, who blow the flame, have no intention to refine it, and ſometimes the believer himſelf cannot ſee how the means will anſwer the end: but God over-rules every trial for his glory and the believer's good, and makes it more precious than that of gold, which periſheth. Troubles, oppoſition from within and from without, all the difficulties he can meet with, only ſerve to purge out his droſs, and to render him more fit for his heavenly walk. Herein the grace of God is moſt marvellous. Such a power as brought light out of darkneſs, is continually directing and ſanctifying the croſſes of the believer, ſo that not one of them can ſtop him; nay, the greateſt of them help him forward in his journey, and bring him not only more ſafely, but alſo more happily to the end of it. Adored for ever be the Father's love, which makes all things work together for his children's good!

When man was in Paradiſe, there was nothing in him but what was conformed to the image of God. His will was one with the will of God. In this ſtate there was no croſs. Harmony ruled in the innocent breaſt; and God looked on his favourite man with delight. They were perfectly agreed, and they walked together in holy and happy friendſhip. But when man fell,

then ſin brought in ſorrow, in the ten thouſand miſeries which the body ſuffers, and in the entire corruption of the faculties of the ſoul, particularly the will, now at enmity with the will of God. Hence our croſſes. Sin is their fruitful parent; and while we are in a body of ſin and death, we cannot be exempt from ſuffering: for man is born to trouble as naturally as the ſparks fly upwards; but the unregenerate man does not feel the cauſe of this. He has no ſpiritual ſenſes. He is dead to God. He does not know why he ſuffers, and he is not ſenſible of what he deſerves to ſuffer, therefore he goes on merrily, laughing and ſinging under a load of guilt, enough to ruin a thouſand worlds. But when the ſpirit of life enters into him, and he is made to ſee his ſtate, to feel his guilt, and to fear his danger, then he begins to groan under the croſs. Every day he diſcovers how totally he was fallen, and departed in heart from the living God. He now taſtes the bitterneſs of ſin, and finds the deadly fruits of it. Although there be a remedy provided to bring the wanderers home, and he is made acquainted with it, yet he is without ſtrength to apply it. He cannot by believing take the comfort of it. When it is given him to believe, he ſtill has ſin and ſuffering to exerciſe his faith. Againſt his corruptions and temptations he muſt be continually fighting the good fight of faith. From this warfare he can have no diſcharge but by

death. He must take to himself the whole armour of God, and be under arms night and day, or he will never be able to resist the assaults of evil spirits, or to overcome the opposition of evil men. This is the heritage of all the servants of the Lord. All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. If they be on the Lord's side, all his enemies will certainly be their's; so that if they enter into his kingdom, it must be through much tribulation. The king himself went this way to the crown, bearing his cross; and he has assured us there is no other way---"Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, CANNOT be my disciple"---he must deny himself what by nature he loves, and must love what by nature he hates: unless he live in this state of self-denial, which is to be his daily cross, he cannot live in communion with me, as one of my disciples. If he be one of the highest of them, yet he must carry his cross: for he has still a fallen nature, and its senses and appetites are always lusting against the will of God, and it is like plucking out a right eye to deny them their gratifications, and to refuse them their much-coveted pleasures. He is in a body of sin and death, and must carry his cross to his grave, being liable to all the sufferings which mortality is heir to, and all the way mortified under them, because he cannot bear them without faith, nor hold out without patience, and these graces are not of himself, but are

the gift of God. He is alſo forced to carry another croſs all his days, even the corruption of his nature, depraved in every faculty, and always inclined to evil. This is the burden and grief of the children of God, under which they all groan: and a ſore and heavy burden it is, heavier for being continual, and for its always working againſt the grace and glory of the Lord Chriſt: for this infection of nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerated, and appears in nothing more than in their adulterous love to their own righteouſneſs, of which they are ſo dotingly fond, that after the holy Spirit has divorced them from it, and their Maker has become their huſband, even the Lord their RIGHTEOUSNESS, yet ſtill an unlawful attachment to their own righteouſneſs remains, and is the cauſe of the greateſt croſſes, and of the heavieſt trials they meet with in their way to heaven.

Hence the croſs becomes neceſſary for the whole nature of fallen man, for body and ſoul. The ſenſual appetites are continually ſeeking their gratification in unlawful things, and the ſpiritual faculties are full of blind pride and ſelf-righteouſneſs, and know no way to the divine favour, but by their own works and goodneſs. The croſs is indiſpenſably needful to mortify the fleſh, with its affections and luſts, and to crucify the vanity of the mind, that when it would glory it may have nothing left to glory in, but the Lord.

In this light let us conſider the infinite love, which appointed the outward croſs for the outward man, and the inward croſs for the inward man; and let us ſee how, by each of them, communion with God is preſerved, and the believer is helped forward in his bleſſed journey.

CHAP. IX.

The believer, exerciſed with the outward croſs, carries it with patience, and finds it a great help to him in his walk heavenwards.

WE call that a croſs which oppoſes our will. This oppoſition renders it painful and grievous. A very little matter, the leaſt triſle, becomes a great croſs, when our will is ſet much againſt it. How then can the believer rejoice with a heavy croſs upon his back; or how can he rejoice all his days, if he muſt carry it to his grave? The bleſſed goſpel diſcovers how this may be, and the bleſſed Spirit gives the experience of it: for he continues to teach the doctrines of grace, and under the croſs he enforces them. What has been treated of in the former chapters he now applies with life and power. The doctrines are put to the trial, and it appears that they are of God: for none could produce the effects which follow upon believing them, but an almighty arm. Faith is tried in the fire, and the believer is con-

vinced it is the faith of God's elect: for the promiſe is made good--"When thou walkeſt through the very fire thou ſhalt not be burned, neither ſhall the flame kindle upon thee." His love to his reconciled God is put into the fiery furnace, and it comes out, like the three children, ſenſible their God had been with them in the furnace, and their God had brought them out; for which marvellous inſtances of his love to them, their love was increaſed to him. This is God's way. He gives grace and then tries it. When he has enabled the ſinner, by believing, to find peace and love, then he would improve thoſe graces by daily exerciſe, and if the exerciſe of them be very ſharp and afflicting, it is only to eſtabliſh the truſt of his heart, and to confirm the affection of his ſoul more perfectly in his God. His God. Mind that. His God ſtill. The croſs is not ſent to weaken that relation. He is the ſame tender father to his children, when he puts it upon them, as when he takes it off; and he would have them by faith to experience it. While they depend on his being perfectly reconciled to them through the obedience and ſacrifice of Immanuel, they will ſee the ſame paternal affection invariably ſet upon them, and always diſpoſed to do them good. His love changeth not. The happy objects of it have given this glorious teſtimony, even when under his croſs--"WE KNOW that all things work together for good"--they found

it ſo. Whatever he ſent to them came with a meſſage of his love. "Hear ye the rod, and him that ſent it." They hear what he ſays by it, for it ſpeaks of the Father's love, and the belief of this quiets their minds under the ſtroke of this rod. Thus it anſwers his purpoſe---This cometh not forth of the duſt, but is appointed for me; my Father ſent it, not in anger for the puniſhment of my ſins, but in the tenderneſs of his affection---He is not dealing with me as the ſupreme diſpoſer of all events, who may afflict, and juſtly, his rebel creatures according to his ſovereign will; but he has ſent me this affliction with a meſſage of grace and peace---I know it is well ordered---I kiſs the rod, and I bleſs him that ſent it.

The apoſtle Paul uſes this argument to the ſuffering Hebrews. They had endured a long and great fight of afflictions. They had need of patience. He therefore gives them, in the 11th chapter, a ſhort hiſtory of the Lord's favourites, and ſhews that they all carried his croſs, and that he ſupported them all under it; yea, gave them ſtrength to run their race, till every one of them won the prize. Then he requires them to look to Jeſus, the greateſt ſufferer, out of whoſe fulneſs they might receive faith to run, and patience happily to finiſh the ſame race. And leſt they ſhould be weary through ſuffering long, or faint in their minds under hard ſuffering, he reminds them of the character of their heavenly Father, who, out of the ten-

dereſt love, appointed their croſſes:---" Have ye forgotten the exhortation," ſays the apoſtle, " in which your Father ſpeaketh unto you as unto children? MY SON, deſpiſe not thou the chaſtening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every ſon whom he receiveth. If ye endure chaſtening, God dealeth with you as with ſons: for what ſon is he whom the father chaſteneth not? But if ye be without chaſtiſement, whereof ALL are partakers, then are ye baſtards and not ſons." O what a bleſſed exhortation! How full of love---the love of God the Father---love to his child, who wants correction ---love that would not touch him with the rod, till he had moſt tenderly informed him of his gracious purpoſe. My SON, my beloved, this chaſtening is from thy Father. It was determined for thee by covenant-love, and ſettled upon thee for thy portion in the great charter of heaven. All thy croſſes were then mercifully appointed---their weight and meaſure---how long---how great---how many---what ſtrength was needful to bear them---what comforts under them---and what holy fruits ſhould be produced by them---all was fixed by love, is now given in love, and is to bring thee to greater enjoyment of my love. My dear child, deſpiſe not then my chaſtening, nor faint when I rebuke thee. Be aſſured it is for thy good. There is a *needs muſt*. It is ſo neceſſary, that I cannot love

thee without chaſtening thee, nor receive thee among mine adopted without ſcourging thee. See then how thou takeſt my correction. Look at thy temper and behaviour under it. Examine. Art thou patient? Not ſuffering merely, but ſuffering quietly, is the proof of thine adoption---If ye ENDURE chaſtening---if when I afflict, thou canſt poſſeſs thy ſoul in patience under mine afflicting hand, then I deal with thee as with ſons---I give thee thy portion of ſuffering, and I give thee thy portion of grace to bear it. All my children want correcting, and they all have it: for what ſon is he whom the Father chaſteneth not? They are all ſufferers. Mine only begotten was the greateſt. None of you can ſuffer as he did; but whoever is following him muſt ſhare with him in his croſs, and bear it after him. If any be without my chaſtiſement, whereof all mine are partakers; if they cannot bear it; have not faith to receive my loving correction, and therefore no patience to wait the bleſſed iſſue of it: ſuch do not belong to my family; they are none of mine; they are baſtards, and not ſons.

How ſhould the argument in this ſcripture reconcile the believer to ſuffering! How eaſy, yea, how happy, ſhould it make him under the croſs! He ſuffers, but it is from his Father, who, in moſt perfect love and infinite wiſdom, appointed the croſs, and appointed alſo the precious fruits, which it

ſhould produce. O my ſoul, keep this in mind. Remember whoſe croſs thou art carrying. Thy Father contrived it. He ſent and continues it, that it may work under him for the beſt. It is the chaſtening of his richeſt love. Receive it then patiently, thankfully at his hands, and thou wilt find it full of bleſſings. But take heed how thou conſulteſt ſenſe, or carnal reaſon. Theſe are always enemies to the croſs: for they judge of it only by feeling, and always refuſe to believe what God ſays concerning it. Adhere to the truth; and reject every ſuggeſtion which would inſinuate to thee, that there is any thing but love in the chaſtening of the Lord. He is thy Father. He never loves thee more than when he chaſtens thee. There is no hatred in his heart, no vengeance in his hand. He aſſures thee of this from the infallible word of his mouth. Here may thy faith be ſettled: believe him--he is doing thee good---he is promoting thy beſt intereſt. Caſt not away this confidence, and then the croſs will be the means of bringing thee to the neareſt and holieſt communion which thou canſt have with thy father on this ſide heaven.

In this amiable light look upon thy Father and thy friend. Never forget it, O my ſoul, but keep it in the faith of thy heart, eſpecially when he chaſteneth thee. Then expect from his love, patience under his ſtroke, and after it the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs. Theſe will grow abundantly upon the croſs. They

grow no where elſe ſo rich and ripe. Survey the promiſes which he has made to his ſuffering children, and wait in faith for a joyful harveſt. In due ſeaſon thou ſhalt reap, if thou faint not. And the croſs is intended to keep thee from fainting; becauſe thy Father ſends it for the increaſe and for the ſtrengthening of thy faith. Read and ſtudy what he ſays to thee upon this point. Learn and inwardly digeſt it. In time of trouble thou wilt find great comfort from depending upon the promiſe of the Father to give thee a happy iſſue. Meditate then upon the ſcriptures, in which he has declared his gracious purpoſes in afflicting his children, namely,

First, it is for the trial of faith. God gives it, and then tries it; that it may appear to be his grace, that men may ſee it, and honour him for it, and that it may grow by uſe, which is as neceſſary to ſpiritual, as exerciſe is to bodily growth. Trial ſhews the truth, and brings forth the power of grace, and is thereby a matter of great joy: as the apoſtle James teſtifies, writing to the twelve tribes in their diſperſion and affliction: "My brethren, count it ALL JOY when ye fall into divers temptations, knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience; but let patience have its perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." God be thanked for this word of ſtrong conſolation! What a precious ſcripture is it! How full of encouragement to the believer to look with delight

at *temptations!*---not temptations to ſin, but trials, ſent from God to keep from ſin. When he falls into them by providence, and meets them in the way of duty, then he ſhould judge of them, not from ſenſe, which can feel nothing but ſorrow in afflictions; but he ſhould take account of them from the declared purpoſe of God in ſending them, and he ſhould wait in faith for the bleſſings which they are to produce. God ſays, that they are matter of joy, of ALL JOY, of all true ſpiritual joy---they are not only ſuch in his account, but he alſo makes them ſuch to the believer. Accordingly we read in ſcripture of many who did rejoice in trials. The Hebrews did: for they took JOYFULLY the ſpoiling of their goods. Paul did: "I am comforted," ſays he, "I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation." Nay he went farther---We GLORY in tribulations. He leaped for joy with the croſs upon his back. He boaſted and triumphed under it. What the world accounted his worſt, he made his very crown of rejoicing: for he knew and found that the trial of faith worketh patience: faith receives the croſs from the Father's love, and learns to bear it after Jeſus: by the grace of the Spirit, the bearing of it, as it exerciſes ſo it improves patience. The believer becomes more acquainted with it. Uſe, we ſay, makes perfect. He learns, where the ſtrength to bear is---from whence his comforts are to flow---and from whoſe hand the bleſſed iſſue

is to be received. He waits, therefore, with ſweet ſubmiſſion to his Father's will, that patience may have its perfect work, that by trials it may be exerciſed, by ſharper trials it may be improved, and by daily trials it may appear to be the genuine grace of the Spirit, perfect and entire, lacking nothing. This the believer aims at. He would have every thing that belongs to true patience, and growth in it; he would have it refined by every fiery trial, and made purer and brighter, that it may hold out, till it have done its perfect work. The apoſtle Peter gives the ſame encouragement to the ſame afflicted Hebrews: he exhorts them to faith and patience under their ſufferings, in theſe words: "Ye are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto ſalvation, ready to be revealed in the laſt time; wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a ſeaſon, if need be, ye are in heavineſs through manifold temptations; and the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that periſheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praiſe and honour and glory, at the appearing of Jeſus Chriſt." What treaſures of love are laid open in this ſcripture! Read, O my ſoul, and adore the exceeding riches of thy Father's grace. He knew how needful afflictions were, both for the fleſh and for the Spirit, and therefore he appointed thee thy portion, and he has in mercy informed thee of his deſign in them. He has revealed his

will for the ground of thy faith, that when he ſends them, thou mighteſt experience the bleſſings promiſed to his ſuffering children. The belief of his love, in contriving and in proportioning them to the ability given thee to bear them, would adminiſter matter of joy in ſorrow, and by truſting to his faithfulneſs thou wouldſt greatly rejoice; thy joy would ſo far exceed thy ſorrow. The heavineſs is but for a ſeaſon---the joy for ever. The heavineſs only during the trial of faith---the joy increaſed by that very trial. The trial was only to prove the truth of faith, and to evidence the power of it---not to weaken, but to ſtrengthen it---not to deſtroy, but to refine it. The refiner does not intend to loſe one atom of his gold, but puts it into the fire to purge away the droſs. So does God. "When he hath tried me," ſays Job, "I ſhall come forth as gold." He was tried in the fire, and his faith was found unto praiſe and honour and glory. Therefore he is ſet forth for an example of ſuffering affliction and of patience. Behold, we account them happy, not who ſuffer, but who endure ſuffering. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have ſeen the end of the Lord; that the Lord abounds in compaſſion, and is of tender mercy. O my ſoul, wait upon the ſame Lord, and he will bring all thy trials to the ſame bleſſed end. He has the ſame pity and mercy to thee as he had to Job. Thou haſt the ſame reaſon to believe it

as he had. Thy faith is tried in the fire, as he was, that it may come out of it like gold. The trial was appointed in perfect love, and is to produce the greateſt bleſſings of love. Thy God has moſt gracious deſigns towards thee in putting thee into the fire. It is to try thy faith; whether thou canſt truſt him there. It is to improve thy faith by the trial, that thou mayeſt truſt him more. If thou haſt truſting faith, it is to teach thee patient faith. It is a hard leſſon to learn to truſt againſt ſenſe and carnal reaſon, and to ſay, This croſs is good for me, I deſire to ſubmit, and to take it patiently at the hand of God. O it is very hard to believe that there is nothing but love in every ſuffering; and it is harder to find it ſo, while ſuffering. And yet the Spirit of God declares there is nothing but love in it, and by believing thou wilt certainly find it. May every trial of thy faith eſtabliſh it, and thereby bring forth,

Secondly, The bleſſed fruit of patience. The croſs does good to faith; becauſe by it God teaches his children to bear up, and to hold out; truſting to his promiſes, and waiting in hope for his fulfilling them, and thus it exerciſes patience, which is a grace of the Spirit, learned only in the ſchool of Chriſt, and therefore the giver of it, among his other high titles, is called, *the God of patience*. He firſt enables his afflicted children to believe what he has ſaid of his love in afflicting them, and then to wait for the ex-

perience of his love, under their afflictions. This waiting quietly, without giving way to ſenſe, or unbelief, is patience. Faith is tried, and ſtands the trial. Tribulation comes, faith is exerciſed with it, but holds faſt its confidence in the word of God, and thereby has full proof of the faithfulneſs of God. This worketh patience---a quiet ſubmiſſion to the divine will---and a holy ſubjection to the divine rod. The fleſh murmurs, ſelf-will repines, ſelf-indulgence rebels; but faith looks up for the promiſed ſtrength, and by it conquers them. It ſtops their mouths with a huſh---be ſtill, and know that he is God ---he is my ſovereign and my Father---this affliction indeed is not for the preſent joyous, but rather grievous---nevertheleſs it comes from his love, love guides his hand, love will bring good out of it---O that all within me may ſubmit to his will, and bleſs his name!

But the croſs is hard and painful; fleſh and blood cannot bear it. True; but grace can. To endure is the proper work of patience. It endures by truſting to the word of God, and by receiving from him the promiſed ſtrength. What cannot ſuch a grace endure? When God ſays, "Fear not; I will be with thee, when thou goeſt through the fire:" the believer is hereby forewarned of the fire; and when he is called to go through it, he expects the preſence of his God, that if the buſh burn, it may not be conſumed. How

comfortably does the apoſtle Peter ſpeak of this to the ſuffering Hebrews: "Beloved, think it not ſtrange concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you, as though ſome ſtrange thing had come unto you: but rejoice, inaſmuch as ye are partakers of Chriſt's ſufferings, that when his glory ſhall be revealed, ye may be glad alſo with exceeding joy." He would have them to be accuſtomed to the croſs, it being the only way to the crown. There is nothing new or ſtrange in it. All the crowned heads in heaven carried it, while they were upon earth; yea, the king of ſaints went bearing it before them. There never was ſorrow like unto his ſorrow; and yet for the joy that was ſet before him, he endured the croſs, and deſpiſed the ſhame. Take up thy croſs, O my ſoul, and follow him. Look unto Jeſus. He will give thee ſtrength. He has taken the curſe and wrath out of thy ſuffering. Thou wilt ſee it, the fruit of his love to thee, and it will be the means of engaging thy love to him. What if it be a burning fiery furnace; is it not almighty love which calls thee to go into it? Not to hurt thee, but to try thee, to give thee happy proof of the ſoundneſs of thy faith, and of the power of thy patience. He would have thee to know, that thy patience, truſting to his tried word, is invincible; that no blow can beat it, no fire can burn it, from Chriſt. He would bring thee to experience what the prophet did, when he ſaid---"Thy word is tried to the

uttermoſt, and thy ſervant loveth it." The good word of God was tried, as far as it could be, and the trial proved its truth, and therefore he had freſh reaſon to love it. The trial increaſed his confidence in the truth, and his experience in the ſweetneſs of its promiſes; thereby his patience was confirmed, and he could rejoice, inaſmuch as he was a partaker of Chriſt's ſufferings, both of their infinite ſufficiency, and alſo of their mighty efficacy to ſave. By enjoying theſe bleſſings under the croſs, his heart was happy in the joy ſet before him. He had the earneſt and the foretaſte of heaven; for he knew that when the glory of Jeſus ſhould be revealed, he ſhould be glad with exceeding joy.

But the carnal mind is ready to complain ---this would be true, if the ſuffering was ſhort, but it is long, as well as hard---I have borne up a great while, but now my patience is quite tired out---I am ready to give all up, being weary of my life with the length of my trials. How many have I known in this melancholy caſe! Fair bloſſoms in the mild and gentle ſpring. In fine weather and ſmiling ſunſhine they looked beautiful, and gave hopes of their being in the tree of life, and of their growing and ripening upon it. But, alas! a trying time came, a bleak cold north wind, and a very ſharp piercing froſt---like leaves in autumn, down fell the promiſing bloom. My heart has mourned again and again at the fall of one and another, and

mourns, while I am writing this, over ſeveral now living, who have forſaken God and his ways, for the world and its delights. They met with trouble, and it was too much for them. They were tempted, and they had not ſtrength to reſiſt. The reaſon is thus aſſigned---"He that received ſeed into ſtony places, the ſame is he that heareth the word, and anon, with joy, receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himſelf, but endureth for a while: for when tribulation or perſecution ariſeth becauſe of the word, by and by he is offended." He is offended and falls away, becauſe he had no root; and they who have root are too often tempted to be offended at the croſs. They find it very difficult to bear up under it. Natural infirmity, remaining corruption, and ſtrength of temptation make pain and ſuffering grievous to the fleſh: yea, when they are forced to bear the croſs long, and it is very heavy, they are apt to murmur and fret, grow diſcontented, are tempted to unbelief, and, if they give way to it, to deſpair. How neceſſary is it, then, that they ſhould be enabled to poſſeſs their ſouls in patience, under their great and many trials! To which end, nothing can contribute more effectually, than a ſettled faith in the word and promiſe of a reconciled God. This will ſtay and quiet the ſoul when trouble comes. It is the chaſtening of my Lord, ſays the believer---my loving Father ſends it for good---he is only trying my faith and patience, and the

trial will end well---it is grievous indeed, at preſent, and I go on my way weeping, but I have my ſupports now, and I ſhall ſoon reap a joyful harveſt. I have a faithful promiſe for it, which is a conſtant cordial, and keeps up my ſpirits. My God will be with me as long as the trial laſts---he ſays he will. I believe him, and therefore expect his promiſed preſence and ſtrength, till faith and patience have their perfect work. Such a cordial the apoſtle James gives to the Hebrews. They wanted it much. They were greatly oppreſſed by the rich, and ſome of them were perſecuted even unto death. "Be patient, therefore, brethren," ſays he, "unto the coming of the Lord; behold the huſbandman waiteth for the precious fruits of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and the latter rain: be ye alſo patient; eſtabliſh your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." He puts great ſtreſs upon the Lord's coming: "Yet a very little while, and your Lord will come to appear for you." It is true you are in a fiery trial, but your God calls you to it; and it may ſeem to you a long trial, but he has promiſed you grace ſufficient to bear it. Truſt him then, and he will keep you patient. He knows your frame and temper, and bids you look about you. See, how the huſbandman waits, having only a general promiſe, that ſeed-time and harveſt ſhall not fail; and is it not more reaſonable that you ſhould

wait with patience the end of the Lord. He ſows his ſeed and leaves it. It endures much hard weather, froſt and ſnow, rough winds and wintry ſtorms. Summer comes, but he muſt ſtill wait: his corn is in ear, yet it is liable to ſuffer from long drought and from blights, and to be beaten down with heavy thunder ſhowers; but he has long patience. At laſt he is not diſappointed of his hope. He reaps the precious fruit of the earth, and gathers in his joyful harveſt. Behold, O my ſoul, and imitate. How ſtrong is his faith! Is thine like his? God has only ſaid that the ſeaſons ſhall not fail: he has not ſaid that the harveſt in every field and country ſhall not fail; yet the farmer ſows in faith, and waits in patience. But the promiſe is ſure to thee: "He that believeth ſhall never be confounded;" and doſt thou believe this with a hope that maketh not aſhamed? He has long patience; how is thine? Art thou not weary and faint in thy mind, eſpecially when the courſe of providence ſeems to run counter to thy hope? Canſt thou hold thee ſtill in the Lord, and abide patiently upon him, when he chaſtiſes thee, and ſeems in anger to caſt thee off? He waits long for a harveſt of periſhing things, and canſt not thou wait to have thy fruit unto holineſs, and the end everlaſting life? O what need haſt thou of patience! Seek it, pray for it, beg of thy God to eſtabliſh thy heart, that thou mayeſt be rooted and grounded in faith; and

if troubles come great and heavy, thou mayeſt poſſeſs thy ſoul in patience, ſo long as the Lord ſhall pleaſe to exerciſe thee with them. And never forget that he will certainly come, and quickly. Let this promiſe keep thee from fainting. He will come in with his ſupports; he will adminiſter his comforts under the croſs; he will remove it in due ſeaſon. What can be required for the eſtabliſhing of thy heart, which is not promiſed to thee in this ſcripture: "Caſt not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward; for ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promiſe: for it is but a very little while, and he that ſhall come will come, and will not tarry. Wait then on the Lord, O my ſoul; be of good courage, and he ſhall ſtrengthen thine heart: wait, I ſay, on the Lord."

Perhaps thou art ready to reply---I have waited long, but am ſtill to learn; for my trials are ſo varied, that as ſoon as I have been well exerciſed with one ſort, preſently it is changed, and another comes, to which I was not accuſtomed---And this continually, like Job's meſſengers, one after another; and ſtill the laſt brings a ſadder meſſage than the former---Hard and long trials I have endured, but this conſtant change of them wearies me out; they come ſo unexpected, they find me ſo unprepared, they ſo haraſs my troubled mind, that I am ready to ſink under them---frequently I am tempted to think, that if God

loved me, he would not delight in afflicting me in this manner.

Thus the carnal mind is apt to reaſon againſt God and his ways; but when the believer goes into the ſanctuary and conſults the oracle, he receives an anſwer of grace and peace, and is ſatisfied that this change of trials is nothing new with God. It is his uſual method of training up his children in faith and patience. He appoints troubles for the exerciſe, and all ſorts of troubles for the improvement of their graces. The captain of their ſalvation was made perfect through ſufferings; ſo are all the ſoldiers of Chriſt Jeſus. It was the remark of one of his champions---"MANY are the troubles of the righteous." The apoſtle James, ſpeaking of the perſecuted Hebrews, ſays, "They had DIVERS temptations, different one from another;" and his brother Peter tries to comfort them under their MANIFOLD afflictions, many in number, ſucceeding as faſt as wave follows after wave; and of many kinds, ſome diſtreſſed them in their bodies, others in their minds, in their character, in their ſubſtance, in their families, in every way that affliction could be felt. Patience is the grace ſuited to all theſe trials; becauſe it bears them in the ſtrength of God: for it conſiſts in truſting to his ſure word of promiſe, and believing it againſt ſenſe and feeling. Faith ſays, this preſent trial comes from the love of my covenant God: Patience ſays, then I will bear

it, till he bring it to a good iſſue. Whatever the trial be, patience has the ſame promiſe, and the ſame promiſe-keeping God to truſt in. If he ſend variety of trials, it is only to give a variety of proofs, that he is faithful who hath promiſed. He knows we have divers diſeaſes, which muſt have divers remedies to heal them. We have manifold evils in us, which require manifold afflictions to ſubdue them. And our God intends to give us many bleſſings, and he appoints many troubles to bring us to the enjoyment of them. All theſe are gracious diſpenſations, mercifully contrived, and ſeaſonably adminiſtered, that patience may learn to bear, and may learn to perſevere in bearing. God changes the trial. Patience has a new leſſon, and a new opportunity of improvement. A good teacher brings his ſcholars forward, and when they are gone through one book, and are well grounded in it, then he advances them to another: when they have learned Latin he puts them into Greek. But he does not change their ſtudies out of ill-will or hatred to his ſcholars. They had rather be at play than minding their books; and they had rather get but one leſſon, and be ſaying it over from day to day; but the maſter knows what is beſt for them, and he keeps them to their work. God trains up his ſcholars in various exerciſes, but all for their improvement. He does not conſult what would pleaſe them, but he changes the leſſon

as he ſees needful. He knows when their faith wants confirming, when their patience needs eſtabliſhing, and therefore, in much mercy, he ſends a new trial for the growth of thoſe graces. Leſt they ſhould miſtake his meaning in varying his trials ſo often, he gives them this general rule: "There hath no temptation taken you, but ſuch as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not ſuffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation alſo make a way to eſcape, that ye may be able to bear it." The Father will exerciſe his children with no trial but ſuch as is common to man; and he will enable them to bear it; and he will make a way for them to eſcape. How ſhould theſe conſiderations ſilence their murmurings! If the trial be new to them, yet it is common to man. If it be hard to bear, yet grace is almighty to ſtrengthen patience. If it laſt long, yet it ſhall end well. How convincing are theſe reaſons! How patiently ſhould believers, influenced by them, ſubmit to the chaſtening of the Lord! And yet there is ſtill unbelief in them, which will be urging freſh complaints, and ſtirring up impatience.

The poor ſufferer, feeling his ſmart, is apt to think---Any croſs but mine would be tolerable---I ſhould not ſay one word againſt God, if he tried me with any other; but this cuts me to the heart---Oh it is a very agony both to my fleſh and ſpirit---there is nothing

like it---it is ſo exactly calculated to croſs my temper, to hurt me in the tendereſt part, and to rob me of my moſt beloved gratification; that it is the very thing in the world from which I could have wiſhed to be exempted. ---Any croſs, Lord, but this.

Nay but, O man, who art thou that replieſt thus againſt God? Hold thy tongue as it were with a bridle. Let not ſelf-will murmur, and folly ſpeak againſt the chaſtening of the Lord. He ſays that he is dealing with thee as with ſons. Where is thy faith then, that ſenſe and feeling ſhould be permitted to plead, and to be heard againſt the witneſs of God in his word? Where is thy patience, that thou canſt not bear the preſent croſs, but wouldſt take up any other? Alas! alas! miſtaken man---what canſt thou bear in thine own ſtrength? Thou feeleſt the ſmart of thy preſent croſs, and it makes thee peeviſh and fretful: the ſmart of any other would have the very ſame effect. A leſs than this; the leaſt thing in the world, that oppoſes thy will, would ſtir up thine impatience. Obſerve thy temper how it catches fire at any little oppoſition from men. The ſame temper will be inflamed, and rage, when God chaſtiſes thee, if thou refuſe to receive his correction. Thy rebel will is the cauſe of thy pain, and makes thy croſs ſo bitter: for if God's will and thine were one, there could be no croſs; but his will is almighty, and yet thou reſiſteſt it. God puts his yoke upon thee, and thou art

like a ſtubborn beaſt, which only hurts and galls itſelf, by ſtriving and kicking againſt its work. He tries thee with one croſs, and thou art diſſatisfied; thou couldſt contrive a better for thyſelf. Thou wouldſt be thine own lord and governor. Self-will, they ſay, is a ſure guide to ſelf-deſtruction. Beware then of thine own will. When God calls thee to take up any croſs, do not wiſh for another. He ſends this, and to it he requires thy ſubmiſſion. It is thy duty, and thine intereſt to receive it for the exerciſe and for the improvement of thy patience; but inſtead of taking it up quietly, and waiting for the good fruit of it, thou art quarrelling with it, and oppoſing the will of God. O take heed of this vain attempt. It is a ſnare laid for thee. A fatal trap, into which the love of independence ſeduced the firſt man, and which, ever ſince, eaſily enſnares his poſterity. When thou art tempted to murmur at thy preſent croſs---conſider what it is---meditate a moment upon thy Father's love, who moſt mercifully appointed, who moſt ſeaſonably ſent it---and if it be nothing ſtrange, but common to man, then do not try to ſhift it off, but ſeek the promiſed grace to bear it. There is not a croſs that he will lay upon thee, but he has laid it before upon others, and it will tend greatly to the peace of thy mind, and to the reſtraining of thine own will, to obſerve how he dealt with them. Take notice then, how he, in love, exerciſed them with every croſs

that can be laid upon thee; how he ſupported them under it, and what bleſſed fruit they reaped from it.

This is the kingdom of the croſs; and it is the Lord's will, that every diſciple in it ſhould be as his maſter. He has choſen them to ſuffer with him, as well as to reign with him. And therefore, intending to call forth his gifts and graces into daily exerciſe, he has honoured them with the daily croſs. He ſees it needful often to change it, and he has informed them of his gracious deſigns herein. There is ſcarce any kind of ſuffering, but ſome or other of his people have been tried with it, and he has left promiſes in ſcripture of his ſupport, and of his coming in with comfort, and, in due time, with deliverance. So that whatever thy croſs be, it is not ſent, O my ſoul, to hinder, but to promote communion with thy God, and to help thee forward in the heavenly way.

Art thou pinched with poverty---a believer, but in diſtreſſed circumſtances? Bleſſed art thou of the Lord. "Hearken, my beloved brother, hath not God choſen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom, which he hath promiſed to them that love him?" What a mercy is it to have thine outward eſtate thus appointed for thee by the choice of thy heavenly Father! And the ſame eſtate which he choſe for his beſt beloved. In the exceeding riches of his love, he decreed that thou ſhouldſt be poor in this

world, as Jeſus was---He knew it was beſt for thee---and he choſe thee rich in faith---outward poverty was to be the means of thine improvement in ſpiritual riches---thy want of temporals was to bring thee to live more by faith upon eternal things. O how good is thy God! He ſent thee poverty to enrich thee. It is to bring thee near to God, to keep thee near to him, and to afford thee daily proof of his precious love. Theſe are ſome of the bleſſings of rich faith, and theſe are worth more than all the treaſures of the world. Be content then---thy God will ſupply all thy need. Be thankful---thou art an heir of the kingdom. Bleſs thy God---no creature out of heaven has more reaſon to bleſs him than thou haſt----He is thine--All things are thine.

Perhaps thou art tried with bodily pain and ſickneſs: theſe are hard trials. To endure them is the very crown of patience; but ſtrength to endure them is promiſed, and in waiting upon the Lord will be received; ſo that outward pains ſhall produce inward joy. Thus we read: "The Lord will ſtrengthen him upon the bed of languiſhing; thou wilt make all his bed in his ſickneſs." He is weak-----God ſtrengthens him; he is ſick----God comforts him; he is in pain----God ſmooths his bed, and he lies patient. Sickneſs cannot be pleaſant in itſelf, but is profitable for its fruits. It is the appointment of God, and teaches ſubmiſſion to his ſovereign will. It comes to the believer with

a meſſage of precious love---This bitter cup is ſent from thy heavenly Father, who has many gracious purpoſes to anſwer by thy taking it---He would humble thee, and let thee feel what thou art, and what thou deſerveſt---he would mortify the life of ſenſe---He would give occaſion to increaſe faith, and to advance patience---Drink it up---There is a rich cordial at the bottom---The taſte of it will draw out thy heart in love to God. Happy ſickneſs, which promotes ſpiritual health! Bleſſed pain, which the kind phyſician often makes the way to pleaſure, yea, to the ſweeteſt communications of his love.

Art thou in the fire of perſecution? Are thy friends and relations all in arms againſt thee, for leaving them to follow Chriſt? Is thy dependence upon them, and art thou greatly tempted to make ſome compliances, leſt they ſhould caſt thee out, and thou ſhouldſt come to poverty? This may be a fiery trial; but is a bleſſed one. He will make it ſo, who ſays, "Bleſſed are ye when men ſhall revile you, and perſecute you, and ſhall ſay all manner of evil againſt you falſely, for my ſake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; becauſe great is your reward in heaven: for ſo perſecuted they the prophets who were before you." This perſecution will be ſo far from ſtopping thee in thy way, that it will both help thee forward, and will alſo make thy journey pleaſant. Thy friends revile thee: look up to him who, when he was

reviled, reviled not again. He will turn their reproach into a bleſſing. They perſecute thee: the goodly fellowſhip of the prophets carried the ſame croſs, and found it no hindrance to their ſpiritual joy. They ſay all manner of evil of thee: take heed that they ſay it falſely, and for Chriſt's ſake; and if thou ſuffer for him, and art evil ſpoken of for thine attachment to him, then rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is thy reward in heaven. Thou art a ſufferer with him, and thou ſhalt alſo reign with him. Look forward to the promiſed kingdom. Expect it in faith, and the proſpect will give thee, at every ſtep, joy unſpeakable and full of glory.

Perhaps this perſecution may be carried on to acts of injuſtice, even to the depriving thee of thy property: thou mayeſt ſuffer the loſs of all thy worldly goods for Chriſt's ſake. When God calls thee to this trial, he will give thee ſtrength to bear it, and thou ſhalt be a great gainer by thy loſs. So Paul found it: "I have ſuffered the loſs of all things, and I do account them but dung, that I may win Chriſt." So it was with the Hebrews: "They took joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods, knowing in themſelves that they had in heaven a better and an enduring ſubſtance." What love was here! God was their portion, and their great reward. He had made them happy in the ſenſe of his love; and to manifeſt the reality, and to demonſtrate the

power of it, what great things love can do for his name's ſake, he took away all their earthly delights. "Let them go," ſays Paul, "I part with them as freely as I would with ſo much dung, for I have experienced that the loſs of them has brought me to nearer fellowſhip with my precious, moſt precious Jeſus." "Happy parting," ſay the Hebrews; "farewell, goods and chattels---we rejoice at the ſpoiling of our goods, becauſe we have got faſter hold of the ſubſtance by the loſs of the ſhadow---outward comforts are gone, but inward richly ſupply their place---we are robbed of our earthly poſſeſſions; thank God, we cannot be robbed of our better and enduring ſubſtance: for it is reſerved in heaven for us, where no moth or ruſt can corrupt, and where no thieves can break through or ſteal; in this faith we find our hearts free and light and happy in running the race that is ſet before us."

Thy trial may be ſomething ſtill nearer. It may be the loſs of thy deareſt relations. The wife of thy boſom is taken from thee. Thy favourite child is dead, perhaps drowned, or burned, or killed at a ſtroke: the delight of thine eyes is gone, and thine heart is ready to break. All ſorrow is not forbidden, but ſorrowing even as others who have no hope. Tears may flow, but Chriſtian hope keeps them within their proper bounds; it reſtrains and ſanctifies them. Thy wife is dead, thy child is dead: the Lord gave, and

the Lord hath taken away. He requires thee to forſake loving wife and children, be they ever ſo dear, if love of them cannot be enjoyed without forfeiting his love: "And there were great multitudes with Chriſt, and he turned and ſaid unto them, if any man come unto me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and ſiſters, he cannot be my diſciple." The diſciple gives up himſelf to the maſter's diſpoſal---to learn of him---to believe in him---and to love him. "My ſon," ſays he, "give me thy heart." He has a right to it, and he will admit of no rival. It is his temple and his throne, in which he alone will be worſhipped and honoured. He is a jealous God; and if any love hinder love to him, it muſt be torn from the heart. O diſciple, read this ſcripture, ſtudy it carefully, and it may be the means of ſhewing thee the true cauſe of thy great ſorrow about worldly relations: it is becauſe thou haſt ſo little love to thy beſt relation and friend, Jeſus Chriſt. If thy love to him was what it ſhould be, thy heart would not be ſo grieved at thoſe loſſes; but would, in patient ſubmiſſion, acknowledge---It is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth him good.

Perhaps thou art mourning for the loſs of living friends. They have forſaken thee. Old connections, as dear to thee as thine own ſoul, are broken. Perſons whom thou haſt known from thy childhood, and with

whom thou hadſt grown up in ſtrict friendſhip, are now thine enemies, and become ſo without any offence or fault of thine. They hate thee, becauſe thou art a real Chriſtian; and their hatred is harder to bear, becauſe the world joins with them in it, and thy name is every where caſt out with contempt.

It muſt be ſo. The decree cannot be altered---I WILL PUT enmity between the ſeed of the woman, and the ſeed of the ſerpent. God put it, and put it for ever. The enmity broke out, as ſoon as there were two born into the world. Cain hated Abel, and ſlew him. Ever ſince, he that was born after the fleſh perſecuted him that was born after the ſpirit. There has been one, and but one, perfect man upon the earth ſince the fall; and the enmity of the world followed him unto death. Leſt we ſhould marvel at its following us, he has forewarned us; "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you: if ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but becauſe ye are not of the world, but I have choſen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." What a ſtrange reaſon is this! Becauſe I love you, therefore the world hates you. What God chooſes, the world rejects. Why then, O my ſoul, doſt thou court its ſmiles, or fear its frowns? The world, which lieth in wickedneſs, cannot love thee, and its enmity cannot hurt thee. Remember the words of Jeſus: "Theſe things have I

ſpoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace: in the world ye SHALL have tribulation; but be of good courage, I have overcome the world." I have overcome it for you, and I will overcome it in you: tribulation from it ſhall not hurt your peace in me, but ſhall increaſe it: I will make my love the ſweeter for its enmity: troubles from it ſhall be well repaid with my joys: and when it quite caſts you out, then will I take you into my boſom, and let you know what the affection of the heavenly bridegroom is.

Why then, O my ſoul, art thou afraid of ſuch an exchange? Is it not for thy profit to part with the world for Chriſt, and to give up its joys for his? What greater gain canſt thou expect, than to win Chriſt, and by him to be crucified to this preſent evil world? Dying to it, thou wilt be more alive to him, and therefore happier in him. As other ties are diſſolved, thy heart will be knit cloſer to thy divine lover. Warmed with his precious love, "clothed with the ſun, and the moon under thy feet," thou wilt haſten thy ſteps heavenwards; yea, thou wilt be ready to take wing, and to fly to the embraces of thy dear, ever infinitely dear Jeſus. Thou wilt want no comment upon the words of the bride, the Lamb's wife, but wilt gladly uſe them after her: "Make haſte, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains of ſpices."

In former ages, the children of God were often deprived of their liberty, caſt into priſons, and bound in chains. This ſeems to us a heavy croſs. To be ſhut up in a dark dungeon, put into fetters, and deprived of every worldly comfort, requires great patience: but even this did not ſtop them in their way to heaven, nor in the enjoyment of God by the way. Paul, the priſoner of the Lord, often mentions it among his higheſt honours, that he was accounted worthy to ſuffer for the name of Chriſt. He and Silas were cruelly beaten with many ſtripes, at Philippi; were put into the inner priſon, and their feet faſtened in the ſtocks; but the Lord was with them, and he turned their priſon into a paradiſe; his joy made them forget their wounds and pains; for, at midnight, Paul and Silas prayed, and SANG PRAISES unto God. This has often been the caſe ſince their time; the Lord has often viſited his priſoners, and the light of his countenance has made them happy in their bonds. Indeed, we are not called to this kind of ſuffering at preſent; thanks be to his grace. This is a day of ſuch uncommon mercies, that we have more to fear from our want of thankfulneſs, than from our want of liberty. I pray God we may not grow licentious, and abuſe our great privileges; but may he enable us ſo to value them, and live up to them, that he may be honoured for continuing them to us, and to our poſterity.

In former times, alſo, believers were often forced to ſeal the teſtimony of Jeſus with their blood. And even this did not ſtop them in their walk, nor hinder their communion with God. Hear one of his martyrs; "The Holy Ghoſt witneſſeth, that bonds and afflictions wait for me in every city; but none of theſe things move me, neither account I my life dear unto myſelf, ſo that I may finiſh my courſe with joy, and the miniſtry which I have received of the Lord Jeſus." This was not a vain brag. He ſpake it in humble faith, depending upon his maſter's promiſe, that he would ſtand by him when his blood ſhould be ſhed, and would make him a happy conqueror in the hour of death. And he was more than conqueror; but the grace which made him ſo, was not peculiar to, or the privilege of, an apoſtle; the ſame was given to a noble army of martyrs, who overcame Satan, by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their teſtimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. What a triumph of patience was this! They were enabled to bear any thing, even the loſs of life, rather than ſuffer the loſs of the Lord's favour. Examine, O my ſoul, whether thy faith be like their's. Canſt thou endure, as they did? How is thy patience under the croſs? Read what they went through, who are well reported of by the Holy Ghoſt for their faith, and remember the ſame grace is pro-

miſed to thee, to carry thee patiently through all thy ſufferings: "They had trials of cruel mockings and ſcourgings; yea, moreover of bonds and impriſonments: they were ſtoned, they were ſawn aſunder, were tempted, were ſlain with the ſword; they wandered about in ſheep-ſkins and goat-ſkins, being deſtitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy; they wandered in deſerts and in mountains, and in dens and in caves of the earth, and theſe all obtained a good report, through faith." They are celebrated by the holy Spirit, for having patiently endured, till they had run their race, and finiſhed their courſe with joy. He ſets their example before thee, that thou ſhouldſt not be ſlothful in running the ſame race, but a follower of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promiſes.

Meditate ſeriouſly, O my ſoul, and reflect again and again upon the great need thou haſt of patience. Remember the croſs lies in thy way to the crown, and thou canſt not avoid it. The Lord has appointed it to be thy portion, and it is entailed upon thee, as much as the kingdom is. When he exerciſes and tries thee with it, he does not act merely as a ſovereign, but as a father. He deals with thee as with ſons. His children want, and his children have correction. None are without it: but they find it hard to bear. The will of the fleſh is impatient under the

croſs. Self-love hates it. Carnal reaſon cannot be reconciled to it. If it be thus with ſons, what muſt it be with baſtards? The natural man, when he is brought into great trouble, is like a mad beaſt. If his pains be ſharp and acute, he rages, ſtorms, and blaſphemes: if they be alſo laſting, having no God to go to, he often gives way to deſpair, and diſpatches himſelf with a piſtol, running to hell for relief. O my ſoul, marvel not at this. If God had left thee to thyſelf, the ſame trials might have brought thee to the ſame unhappy end. How neceſſary then is patience! without it, thou canſt not bear the croſs, nor hold on thy way under it, nor profit from it. And how neceſſary are the doctrines before inſiſted on for the practice of patience! No one can ſubmit to bear the croſs, unleſs he be firſt perſuaded that God is reconciled to him, and loves him in his Son. When he is ſatisfied of this, he will ſee all things (the croſs among the reſt) well ordered for him in the covenant, and all working together for the beſt. The croſs is mercifully ſent to make a trial of theſe doctrines: by it God would manifeſt the truth, and bring forth the power of them, that it may appear they were not learned as notions, but experienced by his almighty grace. His end is anſwered. The trial of faith eſtabliſhes the peace of God in the conſcience, and confirms the love of God in the heart, and thereby keeps patience

waiting for ſtrength to hold out, and for a bleſſed iſſue. The believer, made ſtrong in the grace that is in Chriſt Jeſus, endures patiently. He knows from whom his croſs comes. It is the appointment of his Father, who does not ſend it in hatred. He never afflicts his children, but in perfect love. He never put a heavy croſs upon them, to break the back of their patience, but to ſtrengthen it, and to train them up to bear greater burdens. He would teach them their weakneſs and his ſtrength---their wants and his ſupplies---he would call forth their faith for the honour of his word---and their patience for the glory of his faithfulneſs. Lord, teach me theſe leſſons. I want the experience of them every day. O my God, make me a humble diſciple in the ſchool of Chriſt. There only can I learn to ſuffer thy will; to thee I come for this grace. Aſſiſt me, O thou Spirit of wiſdom and revelation, in reading thy word, that through patience and comfort of the ſcriptures, I may have hope. Enable me to meditate night and day on the doctrines of grace revealed in them, and to mix faith with them, that I may be ſtrong in the patience of hope. O merciful God and Father, I deſire to be ſtrengthened mightily by thy Spirit in the inner man to bear thy croſs. I would live in a continual dependence upon thine arm to carry me through every trial. O thou God of patience and conſolation, enable me to bear thy croſs daily to the praiſe of the glory of thy grace, and to bear it pa-

tiently to the end, that I may finiſh my courſe with joy. Be it unto thy ſervant according to thy word, wherein thou haſt cauſed me to put my truſt. *Amen*, ſo be it, Lord, *Amen*.

To receive benefit from afflictions is a great bleſſing. To ſuffer them with a reſigned will, yea, to rejoice in them, as if all the joy in the world was come to us, is contrary to ſenſe and feeling, to carnal reaſon and to human philoſophy; therefore our heavenly Father has graciouſly informed his children of his love in afflicting them: theſe informations are the ground of their faith, and were given to ſilence murmuring in their hearts, and to keep them waiting patiently for the promiſed fruits of ſuffering. Among which, this is a

THIRD, and not the leaſt, namely, the crucifying of the fleſh, and the deadening of it in thoſe affections and luſts, which, if not daily mortified, ſhould ſtop the believer in his walk, and would hinder his holy communion with God. When faith has been tried, and is come out of the fire, proved to be the faith of God's elect; and when patience has gone through the fiery furnace, and has found no harm, then it is the Father's will to advance and to improve his children in the doctrine of the croſs. They have a carnal mind ſtill, which is enmity againſt God---a body of ſin---an old man of ſin---the fleſh in them luſting againſt the

Spirit. This their fleſhly nature, which doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerated, is the greateſt enemy to their holy walk with God, in conſtant peace and growing love: becauſe it is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. The life of ſenſe in them is always oppoſing the life of God. Hence the continual war between nature and grace, which if a man does not find in himſelf, he may depend upon it, he either never was alive to God, or elſe at that time he is dead to God. If he be living by the faith of the Son of God, he will alſo be fighting the good fight of faith againſt all the enemies of his ſalvation. He will never think of putting off the whole armour of God, until he put off the body of ſin and of death: and until that day come, he will be ſtriving for the maſtery over his body, that he may keep it under, and bring it into ſubjection. How abſolutely neceſſary this ſtriving is, appears from the tender compaſſion of our God and Father, who has appointed and decreed, in covenant love, all the croſſes which were to be laid upon our rebel nature, and which were to be kept upon it, till death. It is his holy will, hereby to reſtrain its affections, to mortify its luſts, to hedge up its way by thorns and afflictions, and by theſe means he would weaken its power. Is not this mercy unſpeakable? And what more likely method could he contrive thus to crucify the fleſh, than to put it, and to keep it,

upon the croſs? For as the ſinful nature is deadened, the new man is renewed, day by day. The one grows more alive by the mortification of the other. The ſubduing of unbelief, pride, and ſelf-ſeeking, is the ſtrengthening of faith, humility, and glorifying God. This command, therefore, is frequently given to believers: Put off the old man---put on the new---mortify your members which are upon the earth---crucify the fleſh, with its affections and luſts. And this is ſpoken to believers, high in grace, as high as ever any went, or can go. The Spirit of God ſays to the SAINTS at Rome: "Let not ſin reign in your mortal body, that ye ſhould obey it in the luſts thereof, neither yield ye your members, as inſtruments of unrighteouſneſs, unto ſin." The infallible Spirit ſpeaks to the SAINTS at Epheſus: "Put off, concerning the former converſation, the old man, who is corrupt according to the deceitful luſts, and put on the new man." The ſame precept is given, by the ſame Spirit, to the SAINTS at Coloſs: "Mortify your members which are upon the earth." This is a holy war; and all the ſaints of God are engaged in it. They are fighting againſt every thing ſinful; but more particularly watching under arms againſt their own corrupt nature, which is their hardeſt warfare: becauſe there is no releaſe from it, and it is carried on by continual ſelf-denial, by reſiſting the affections and

luſts of the old man, and by oppoſing his giving up the members of his body, as inſtruments of unrighteouſneſs, unto ſin. But, as good ſoldiers of Chriſt Jeſus, they reſiſt unto blood, ſtriving againſt ſin. The captain of their ſalvation is always on their ſide, to encourage them with his promiſes, and to help them with his ſtrength. He intends to lead them on, conquering, and to conquer; therefore he lays the croſs upon their corruptions, as the moſt effectual means of ſubduing them, and to reconcile them to it, he ſpeaks unto them, as unto children---

My ſon, deſpiſe not thou the chaſtening of the Lord. I do not afflict thee in hatred, but in covenant love. My deſign is to mortify the body of ſin, and therefore I give thee this wholeſome phyſic. Thou haſt many bad humours and corruptions, for which I have appointed this ſovereign medicine. Truſt my ſkill---believe my love---depend upon mine arm---and thou wilt infallibly find it profitable to the ſpirit, however painful to the fleſh. Wait, and the end ſhall be bleſſed.

To this truth the prophet Iſaiah bears a clear teſtimony. He explains the Lord's deſign in afflicting his people; and tells them, it was to purge them from their iniquity, to keep them from the love of ſin, and to reſtrain the practice of it. He afflicted them in mercy; but he afflicted their

enemies in juſtice. Hath he ſmitten Iſrael as he ſmote thoſe that ſmote him? No; he has not. Or, is he ſlain according to the ſlaughter of them that are ſlain by him? No; he chaſtiſes his in love; he has appointed the meaſure, the time, the degree, of their correction: "In meaſure, when it ſhooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it; he ſtayeth his rough wind in the day of his eaſt wind: by this (moderate affliction) therefore, ſhall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his ſin"---to keep him back from ſin in general, and from the ſin of idolatry in particular, as it follows in the prophet: "When he maketh all the ſtones of the altar like chalk-ſtones that are beaten in ſunder, then the groves and images ſhall not ſtand up." The altar, at which they offered their idol-worſhip, ſhall be broken down, like ſtones burned in pieces for lime, and the groves and images ſhall not ſtand up, but ſhall be broken down alſo. Theſe happy effects ſhall be brought about by ſanctified affliction---iniquity ſhall be purged---ſin ſhall be reſtrained---idolatry ſhall be thrown down. And God ſays, this ſhall be ALL the fruit and end of his chaſtening. He tells his people of his deſign, that they might know their affliction would bring forth good fruit, and that they might wait patiently for the fulfilling of his promiſe. Bleſſed are all they that wait for him: they ſhall never be diſappointed of their hope.

How gracious is God in his dealings with his children! He provides the beſt for them, informs them of it, and, becauſe they have a fallen nature oppoſite to his holy mind and will, an enemy to his glory and to their own peace, he acquaints them with his deſign in ſubduing it. He appoints affliction for this end. It is the chaſtening of the Lord. He promiſes them ſtrength to bear it, and comfort under it. Nothing but good ſhall flow from it. Iniquity, their worſt enemy, ſhall be crucified; actual ſin, ſpringing from the iniquity of their nature, ſhall be mortified; the heart ſhall be deadened to its old idols, and as it dies to them it ſhall be happier in the love of God. O bleſſed croſs! what mercies doſt thou bring with thee. Is not that bleſſed indeed, which, under God, produces ſuch unſpeakable mercies? Take it up then, O my ſoul, bear it patiently, and expect the choiceſt bleſſings of the Father's love from it. Why doſt thou refuſe? It is heavy. It is painful. True; but what makes it ſo? The burden is from thy rebel will. The pain comes from thy corruption, unwilling to be mortified. Take it up in faith, and thou wilt find ſtrength enough to bear it, and bleſſings enough to make it a matter of all joy. Lord God, reconcile me to my daily croſs. May thy will in it be done. Mortify ſin, weaken its power, deaden its affections and luſts. Only, Lord, whatever croſs thou

ſendeſt, give grace with it, that I may bear it patiently, and may wait for its promiſed fruit. Thou knoweſt what would ſtop me in my heavenly journey; if it be my boſom favourite, the deareſt object of my love, O tear it from my heart. Thou haſt given me a deſire to have every rival dethroned. O come, and reign alone in me, almighty Jeſus, and ſubdue whatever oppoſes thy lawful government. My Saviour and my God, make all within me feel the power of thy croſs. Crucify the body of ſin. Spare nothing that would hinder my walking with thee, or would deprive me of thy friendſhip and favours. I bleſs thee, I worſhip thee, I glorify thee, for this infinite grace, that thou haſt made me willing to have all mine idols pulled down. On thee I depend every moment for keeping them down. O my loving Jeſus, carry on thy work, and, in thine own way, ſubdue ſin in me: let me be planted together in the likeneſs of thy death, that I may be alſo in the likeneſs of thy reſurrection----Dead to ſin, but alive to God. I aſk this for thy great name's ſake. Let it be thy good pleaſure to hear and anſwer. I believe thou wilt. I have thy word for it. There I reſt. *Amen* and *Amen*.

With this faith review thy mercies. Conſider, O my ſoul, what a good God has done for thee, and what greater things he has ſtill in ſtore. He has, in ſome meaſure, reconciled thee to his croſs. Thou art convinced it is thy Father's appointment,

contrived for the beſt by his infinite love, and ſettled on thee for thy richeſt portion, in time---He ſends it for the trial of thy faith, that it may be found unto praiſe and honour and glory---for the exerciſe and for the improvement of thy patience---for the mortifying of the body of ſin, and for the deadening of the life of ſenſe. This is the will of thy moſt loving and tender Father. He ſends the croſs to be the means of theſe bleſſings. Certainly, then, it cannot hinder thy walk with him; but, in all theſe reſpects, will tend to keep thee in the way, and to help thee forward in it; and thus,

Fourthly, It will aſſiſt and promote thy holy fellowſhip and communion with God. This is the principal thing in religion. We fell from God by ſin, and it is the greateſt mercy to be brought back to him again. In this point all religions fail, but the Chriſtian. Chriſt is the way. No one cometh to the Father, but by him: for there is ſalvation in no other. He only can forgive ſins: he only can juſtify ſinners. And this way was contrived in the covenant of the Trinity, for the higheſt diſplay of their divine perfections; which begin to be manifeſted when the Spirit of life enters into the ſinner, and quickens him; when the Spirit of adoption enables him to truſt in the atonement and obedience of Immanuel, and thereby to ſee God reconciled, and to call him Abba, Father. With this faith in Jeſus, he ex-

pects from the Father's love all his promiſed mercies. Thus he has fellowſhip with the Father and the Son, by the holy Spirit. He ſtands related to the eternal Three in their covenant offices, and he receives freely in believing the covenant bleſſings of each.

Among theſe bleſſings the croſs is not the leaſt: for it is mercifully appointed to be the means of bringing ſinners to this divine fellowſhip. They go on ſtubbornly after their own hearts, and in the error of their own ways, until the Lord ſends ſome trouble to ſtop them. They look wiſhfully at the gilded cup of pleaſure, and drink greedily of its ſweets, without any fear of the deadly poiſon mixed up with it. But when God convinces of ſin, then comes ſorrow: they feel the poiſon working in a ſenſe of guilt and dread of puniſhment, which teach the want of a ſaviour, and are a good ſchoolmaſter to bring them unto Chriſt. So God dealt with the chief of the Old Teſtament ſinners---a giant in iniquity, who ſurpaſſed all that were before him in Jeruſalem, for idolatry and blood-ſhedding. The Lord ſent his prophets to warn him of his guilt, but he would not hearken. He hardened his heart, till the Lord brought upon him the captains of the hoſt of the king of Aſſyria, who took Manaſſeh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon: and when he was in affliction

he beſought the Lord his God, and humbled himſelf greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed unto him; and he was intreated of him, and heard his ſupplication, and brought him again to Jeruſalem into his kingdom: then Manaſſeh knew that the Lord he was God. His caſe was not ſingular. It is a common thing with the Lord to ſend affliction to make ſin bitter, that he may lead his people to true ſorrow for it, and that they may ſeek until they find ſalvation. And when they have found it, he ſtill uſes the croſs to keep them near unto himſelf. Indeed the croſs alone has not this effect, but rather the contrary. The natural man has his fretfulneſs ſtirred up by ſuffering, and cannot help murmuring at the will of God. But grace ſanctifies ſuffering. God makes it a bleſſing to his children, as by it he exerciſes their faith in ſuch general promiſes as theſe.

If God ſends great and many troubles, they ſhall not ſeparate believers from him; becauſe he will then be with them; as he ſpake unto Iſrael: "Fear not to go down into Egypt, for I will there make of thee a great nation; I will go down with thee into Egypt." It was the houſe of bondage, in which the taſkmaſters heavily afflicted his deſcendants with their burdens; but the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. So it was with the Iſrael of God. They need not fear any afflic-

tion: for their God has promiſed to be with them in it, and by it to make them great Chriſtians; the more they are afflicted the more ſhall their graces multiply and grow: "I will be with thee in trouble," ſays God, "I will redeem, I will ſave thee from all thy troubles---many are the troubles of the righteous, but I will deliver thee out of them all---yea, when thou paſſeſt through the water and through the fire, I will be with thee, and will preſerve thee from all evil ---I will make all theſe things work together for thy good." Theſe promiſes are a great ſupport to faith: for God engages to be with his children in every affliction. He does not intend that any ſhould ſeparate them from him, but that all ſhould keep them near to himſelf. He ſays he will be with them: they therefore expect his preſence: and if their afflictions be very great, they may on good grounds wait for his time of deliverance. And as his word cannot be broken, their truſt in it will be confirmed, and their hearts will be eſtabliſhed in waiting upon the Lord. If their afflictions continue long, he is with them all the time, making them ſenſible of their own weakneſs, and putting forth his promiſed ſtrength, both that they may endure, and may alſo perſevere in enduring: thus he improves their patience. And becauſe they have ſtill a carnal nature, which cannot bear the croſs, God therefore keeps it upon them, in order

to crucify the fleſh with its affections and luſts, that as they die unto ſin they may live unto righteouſneſs. Such is the declared purpoſe of God in afflicting his children: he would hereby cheriſh theſe graces in them, by which communion with him is kept up; and as theſe grow, communion with him will grow in proportion. Faith will look more at the truth, and live more upon the faithfulneſs of God. Patience will depend more on his arm, and the leſs happineſs the believer can find in the creature, he will ſeek and will find the more in his God. The mortifying of the old man will, of courſe, make the new man more alive: for as the power of the croſs of Chriſt is laid upon the former, the power of the life of Chriſt will be experienced in the latter.

But ſuch is the goodneſs of God to his children under the croſs, that he has given them ſeveral very particular and expreſs promiſes, in order to ſtrengthen their faith and patience. He has ſhewn them what fellowſhip they are to expect with the eternal Three in their covenant offices; for promoting which he moſt mercifully provided the croſs. O my ſoul, attend to this; carefully ſurvey this rich contrivance of divine love, and when the croſs is ſent, take it up in faith, and expect to be a partaker of its covenant bleſſings.

Remember, it is laid upon thee to promote

communion with thy God and Saviour. The appointed trial comes. It is to give thee proof of the ſoundneſs of thy faith in Jeſus, and to let thee ſee, by experience, that thou haſt not believed in vain. Thou haſt fled to him for refuge, from ſin and guilt, from wrath and hell: he took thee into his protection, and now thy ſafety in him is to be attacked. It will be ſeen that the foundation upon which thou ſtandeſt will bear thee up in an hour of temptation. If thou haſt indeed fellowſhip with him in his glorious ſalvation, it will now be made manifeſt, to thy great profit. The croſs is laid upon thee, a heavy, a bitter croſs: it deprives thee of all ſenſible comfort, and is kept upon thee till thou haſt no proſpect of any. Hope in creature-comfort is failed. This is a ſweet ſeaſon for ſpiritual communion with thy Jeſus. He has deadened the enjoyment of other things, that thy heart might be happier in him; therefore now thou art to bring the principles laid down in the former chapters into practice. Here is a fair opportunity to make uſe of them: for without them a man muſt ſink under ſuch a croſs; but, through faith in the righteouſneſs of thy God and Saviour, thou wilt not only have powerful arguments, but wilt alſo have powerful grace, to bear thy ſufferings, patient under them, and thankful for them:

Under them thou wilt be tried.—It is good ground, upon which I have built my hope

of ſalvation? Is it the rock of ages? Does it bear me up ſafe, and keep me unſhaken in this time of trouble? Yes; bleſſings, eternal bleſſings on my precious Jeſus: I have fled to him for refuge, and he has ſet my feet upon a rock that can never be moved: Chriſt, my paſſover, is ſacrificed for me: in the blood of ſprinkling I have put my truſt, and I am ſafe from the deſtroyer: he is my propitiation, in whom I have redemption through faith in his blood: he is mine advocate alſo with the Father, ſtanding in his preſence as my ſurety: while the Father ſees him and loves him, he will ſee me in him, and love me with the ſame love: Jeſus is mine atonement with him, my righteouſneſs, my ſanctification, and my full redemption. O thou moſt lovely loving Jeſus, I have often been happy in the ſenſe of mine intereſt in thee, but never ſo happy as now. This croſs is ſanctified indeed: for it has removed what hindered my communion with thee, and has brought me to ſeek thy preſence, and to enjoy thy ſupports and thy comforts. I was fooliſh enough to wiſh it might paſs from me; but this was mine infirmity. Pardon it, my ſweet Jeſus, and accept mine unfeigned thanks for thy late mercies. Never in my life did I find the virtue of thy ſacrifice in the peace of my conſcience, nor had I ſuch intimate communion with thee in thy finiſhed ſalvation, as I have had under this

croſs. It tried me indeed, but the trial was to thy glory, and to my profit. I am now more ſatisfied than ever that thy ſalvation is infinitely perfect, and that I have my ſhare in it: I have it indeed now: for I am a partaker of the things which accompany ſalvation. I am making uſe of them---I find their reality---I enjoy their ſweetneſs---bleſſing and thanks and praiſe, without ceaſing, be unto thee, my adorable God and Saviour.

Is it not, O my ſoul, thy fervent prayer, that thou mayeſt live in holy friendſhip with Jeſus? Why then doſt thou fear his croſs, which is his appointed way and means of improving thine intimacy with him, and likeneſs to him? O ſtudy the diſcovery of his love in the ſcriptures; and take particular notice of the promiſes which he has made to his ſuffering brethren. Read, mark them, mix faith with them, that they may be fulfilled in thine experience. Remember, thou canſt not ſuffer but by his will, to which he expects ſubmiſſion: he ſends the croſs to teach thee this leſſon. It cannot hurt thee if thou doſt not quarrel with it; but if thy will be reſigned to his, herein thou wilt have fellowſhip with him; and thou wilt have reaſon conſtantly to be praying to him---Not my will, Lord, but thine be done.

Conſider, for the improvement of this fellowſhip, that thy Lord himſelf was exer-

ciſed with the croſs. He has gone before thee, bearing it. He has taken the curſe and wrath out of it, and has ſanctified it to all his followers. In faith they muſt take it up, and in patience carry it, or they will not come to the kingdom. Certainly, then, their crucified Lord will be with them; yea, he has promiſed: "I will be with thee in trouble"---ſeek his preſence, O my ſoul, under the croſs---wait for communion with him---he has ſaid he will be with thee: expect, therefore, the light of his countenance, which is better than life. Do not fear the croſs, ſince it is to bring thee ſuch a bleſſing; it is to be the means of thy fellowſhip with Jeſus, in his ſenſible ſupport and heavenly comfort; take it up then. Suppoſe it removes all thine earthly joy: let it go. The pain of its loſs is not to be compared with the joy of thy ſpirit. Jeſus will give thee pure holy joy; and, by his divine art, will extract it out of pain. He afflicts that he may comfort. He takes away ſenſual, that he may give ſpiritual, pleaſure. He removes creature-love, that he may communicate more of his happy love. In mercy he chaſtiſes. He ſees there is need to mortify ſin. He ſends the croſs for this purpoſe, and bleſſes what he ſends. It works like wholeſome phyſic. But oh! it is bitter, it is nauſeous to the taſte. Why do you chew it then? Swallow the pill. The benefit is not to be found in the mouth,

but in the ſtomach. There it will purge bad humours. The ſovereign phyſician intends it ſhould operate upon every evil temper which would hinder your bleſſed communion with him, and ſhould be the means of exerciſing thoſe graces by which that communion is maintained and may be improved.

Such is the croſs of Chriſt---taken up in faith, and carried in patience; it promotes daily fellowſhip with him, which is the greateſt bleſſing upon earth. There is no greater in heaven: only they enjoy it by ſenſe, and we by faith. But we have the ſame fellowſhip with them in Jeſus, and the ſame communion with them in the graces of his ſalvation. And for theſe he makes way by his croſs. He deadens the ſoul to the life of ſenſe, that it may feel more of happineſs in him. When he has withdrawn other joys, he often ſhines into the heart with joy unſpeakable. He generally vouchſafes theſe his love-tokens to his ſuffering brethren, and gives his richeſt cordials in their deepeſt diſtreſs. Each of ſuch happy ſouls can ſay---It is good for me to ſuffer with Jeſus. Yes, Lord; I am thy witneſs; thy croſs is good; it has been the means of my greateſt good; for thou haſt brought me by it to forſake communion with other objects, and to enjoy communion with thee in thy precious love. If thou haſt been pleaſed to take away any of my beloved objects, thou haſt, in much mercy, ſupplied

their place with thy preſence. I have found my loſſes my chief gain. O my Jeſus, Lord God almighty, I bleſs thee and adore thee for the diſtinguiſhing grace vouchſafed to me under the croſs. It was entirely from thee, and the effect of thy love, that I had any patience, or any fellowſhip with thee in the way of ſuffering. It was thy doing, and I glorify thee for enabling me to maintain peace with the Father through faith in thine obedience unto death, and for ſatisfying me that my croſſes were appointed and ſent by covenant-love. Thou art the giver of theſe bleſſings, and on thee I wait for the continuance of them. 'Whatever thou calleſt upon me to ſuffer, order it and me, as ſeemeth beſt to thy godly wiſdom; but leave me not to myſelf. Be always with me, my good Lord, that I may bear thy croſs, and carry it patiently and profitably, thou ſuſtaining both me and it every ſtep of my way to heaven. Hear me, my Jeſus, and anſwer; for without thee I can do nothing; but ſtrengthened by thee I ſhall be able to bear all things, and my daily croſs will keep me in daily communion with thee, to my profit and to thine eternal praiſe. *Amen.*

Thus the croſs of Chriſt is ſanctified, and keeps up communion with him in the bleſſings of his ſalvation. So it does with the Father in his love. In the covenant, his name is expreſſive of his office. He is a

Father who has every holy affection and feeling of love. He embraces, in the bowels of the tendereſt parent, all his family---Chriſt the head, and all the members of his body the church. With one undivided love his heart is ſet upon Chriſt and them, and with the ſame bountiful hand he bleſſes him and them. What Chriſt is they ſhall be. In this moſt gracious relation he ſtands to the whole houſehold of faith. He is their Father who loves and accepts them, pardons, juſtifies, ſanctifies, and bleſſes them with all ſpiritual and eternal bleſſings in Chriſt Jeſus.

It is hard to believe this under the croſs. To cleave to him in love, as our Father, when his hand is lifted up to ſmite, yea, when we ſmart under his rod, then to ſee love in his heart, and love guiding his hand, is faith very triumphant. We are apt to look upon our ſufferings as coming from the wrath of God. We think he muſt be diſpleaſed, or elſe he would not delight to put us to pain: upon this account we are not reconciled to the croſs, but would ſhake it off, if we could. The ſcripture gives us a different view of this matter, and repreſents God in a more amiable light, even in the ſevereſt chaſtiſement of his children. He is their Father, and they are his ſons. This relation cannot ſubſiſt without his chaſtening them. He informs them of the neceſſity of it, he declares to them his pur-

pose and grace before the chastening, and he assigns the motives and ends of his proceeding. He has always the same Father's love, and is always dealing with them as with sons. His cross is one of the chief marks of it. He sends it with a message of love, and it comes to them big with mercies. When the Father intends an abundant communication of his love, he generally makes way for it by some heavy cross; and when he would continue or increase his favours, he keeps the cross upon them. It is his appointed means of promoting fellowship with him, in the graces and blessings of his fatherly love. And it answers this end, when it is received by faith, and carried by patience: for then the believer, resting on the sure foundation laid for him, in the holy life and death of Immanuel, sees the Father reconciled, and expects every promised blessing from his love. Whatever cross comes, he receives it from his Father in Jesus. He holds fast this truth---God is my God---he loves me perfectly in his Son, and therefore I shall find some proof of his fatherly love in this affliction. But if his faith be weak, if he forget, or forsake for a time, his foundation, then the cross will become intolerable. Murmuring will arise. The flesh will hearken to unbelief. Fretfulness will take place, and thus God will be robbed of his glory, and the believer of his comfort. It has pleased God, therefore,

in order to ſtrengthen his children's faith againſt theſe attacks, to give them many plain delarations of his invariable intention to do them good in all their afflictions. The Son is a witneſs for him: he was in the boſom of the Father, and knew all the purpoſes of his heart. He has given us a moſt delightful account of the Father's deſign in afflicting his children: "I am," ſays he to his diſciples, "the true vine, and my Father is the huſbandman: every branch that beareth not fruit in me, he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, HE PURGETH IT, THAT IT MAY BRING FORTH MORE FRUIT." The Father looks upon all his children as one with Chriſt; as much united to him, and in him, as the branches are in the vine; therefore, as a wiſe huſbandman, he takes the ſpecial charge and care of them. Every branch that does not bear fruit in Chriſt---it is not as we read it, every branch in me, but every branch that does not bear fruit IN ME---whatever it may ſeem to be---in profeſſion, a branch---in ſhew, a fruitful branch, yet it has no life; it was never cut off from the old dead ſtock, nor grafted into me, the life-giving vine. The huſbandman knows this well. Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, ſhall be rooted up. He does this in an hour of trial. Then it appears that ſuch branches were only in appearance united to the vine: for if he had

made them part of it, he would, no doubt, have continued them in it; but he took them away, that they might be manifeſt that they were not one with the vine. This is a great part of the vine-dreſſer's buſineſs---he ſuffers no rotten branches upon his vine. He goes over his charge, and attends to every branch. If any ſeem to men, or to themſelves, to be in the vine (for hypocrites are great ſelf-deceivers, and the ſelf-righteous love to be deceived, and proud nature is fond of growing into Chriſt by ſomething of its own) the vine-dreſſer, in due time, diſcovers their miſtake, and manifeſts to the world that they were not branches of his grafting: for he *taketh them away:* but every branch, ſays Chriſt, that beareth fruit by its communion with me, he *purgeth:* by his divine huſbandry he removes every thing which would ſtop its growth and hinder its fruitfulneſs. The branches of the vine are ſo weak that they always want a prop---he ſupports them. They often run very luxuriant---he cuts them with his pruning-knife. They have many bad humours and juices in them---thoſe he corrects. He purges every noxious quality; and whatever is contrary to the holy nature of the heavenly vine he ſubdues. Moſt merciful is his purpoſe herein. He would have the branches of his own grafting to be lively and flouriſhing---like the ſtock upon which they grow. I am the

vine, ſays Chriſt, ye are the branches. God's huſbandry is to make the branches like the vine: therefore he purgeth them, in order *that they may bring forth much fruit.* And is this his deſign? Does he afflict them entirely for their good? Does he ſend every trial and trouble to purge their corruptions, and to quicken their graces? Has the Lord Jeſus given us ſuch a pleaſing view of his Father's love, aſſuring us that all croſſes are ſent by him, to make us more lively and more fruitful? Since this is the caſe, what great reaſon haſt thou, O my ſoul, to expect theſe bleſſings from the croſs! Here is a promiſe for thy faith to reſt on. A promiſe which diſcovers the heart of thy Father, and his abundant love in afflicting thee. He would have thee not only to believe in his love, but alſo to enjoy it. He afflicts thee; but it is in order to thy keeping up communion with him under the croſs, and he knows it is the beſt means of keeping it up, and of promoting it. O ſeek then, by faith, for the promiſed fruit. Expect in patience the rich harveſt. And that thou mayeſt quietly ſubmit to the Father's will in purging thee, as a branch, obſerve how exactly the apoſtle Paul agrees with his bleſſed Maſter: "Furthermore, we have had fathers of our fleſh, who corrected us, and we gave them reverence; ſhall we not much rather be in ſubjection unto the Father of ſpirits, and live? For they verily,

for a few days, corrected us, after their own pleaſure; but he for our profit, that we might be PARTAKERS OF HIS HOLINESS." There is a reverence due to earthly parents, and children are required to ſubmit to their correction; although herein they often conſult their own will and pleaſure more than their children's profit. And is not greater reverence due to the Father of our ſpirits, and ſhall we not ſubmit to his corrections? Eſpecially ſince his deſign in them is to promote the greateſt dignity and higheſt happineſs of his children, even to make them partakers of his holineſs: for to *partake* is not only to give them a title to, but alſo to give them poſſeſſion of, to communicate, to have fellowſhip with him, to ſhare with him in his *holineſs*. Holineſs is the Father's image in his children, by which he makes them like him, and capable of enjoying him. He choſe them in Chriſt before the foundation of the world, that they ſhould be holy. He choſe them in Chriſt, and made Chriſt their ſanctification. In him they partake, as branches in the vine, of his holy nature. They are one with him in righteouſneſs and true holineſs. He is the divine root, from which all the branches, by the influence of the holy Spirit, derive their nouriſhment and growth. From him is their fruit found. And the heavenly huſbandman purpoſing to make the branches very fruitful, has provided effectual means.

Among which the chief is his fatherly correction. This he ſends to all his children, and in the tendereſt love. He would have them to bring forth much fruit, that herein he may be glorified---holy fruit, produced by his care and culture, and ripened by daily communications of his grace. Therefore he appoints many heavy trials and croſſes, by which he deſigns to bring them not only to believe in his love, but alſo to a growing enjoyment of it. He would communicate to them an increaſe of its bleſſings. He would have them nearer to himſelf, and more like to himſelf---Holy *as* he is holy---not in degree, but in likeneſs. He would teach them more ſubmiſſion to his will, for which he wiſely and mercifully ſuits the croſs. He would improve their love to him, which he does by manifeſting his to them: therefore he ſends his croſs to deaden their hearts to other love, that he may give them a happier ſenſe of his. And his children have found ſuffering times bleſſed times. They never had ſuch nearneſs to their Father, ſuch holy freedom with him, and ſuch heavenly refreſhments from him, as under the croſs. It only took away what ſtopped the increaſe of this happineſs, which thereby was made more ſpiritual and exalted. The croſs thus ſanctified is the greateſt bleſſing on this ſide of heaven. Becauſe by it the Father keeps his children in the cloſeſt communion that they have with him upon

earth; by it he purges them, makes them fruitful, and partakers of his holineſs; by it he crucifies the life of ſenſe, deadens them to the world, mortifies their luſts and paſſions; and by it, as the outward man periſheth, the inward man is renewed day by day. Moſt bleſſed renewal! Daily the Father communicates (and by means of the croſs) new life, new ſtrength, and new comfort, to the inward man. By the right ſpirit renewed within him, he learns the neceſſity of the daily croſs---he ſees the merciful appointment of it to teach reſignation to the Father's holy will, to work a conformity to the firſt-born among many brethren, both in ſuffering and by ſuffering, to bring in ſenſible experience of the Father's ſupport and comfort. What bleſſings are theſe! How great! how precious! To be branches in the vine, and to have the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt the huſbandman, who grafts them into him---O what an infinite mercy is this? And to be under his ſpecial care, faithfully watched over in order to remove every thing hurtful, and to beſtow every thing uſeful, this love paſſeth underſtanding. And to have this love to feaſt upon in the abſence of other comforts, to have them taken away only to make room for this, to enjoy this moſt plentifully, even unto troubles and afflictions, and to be only purged by them in order to bring forth much fruit; theſe are triumphs of divine

love. O my God and Father, I confeſs and deplore my frequent miſtaking thy dealings with me. I did not ſee they were all in love. Through mine ignorance and ſelf-will I thought thy croſs was a puniſhment, and I uſed wickedly to deſpiſe the chaſtening of the Lord. Pardon thy ſervant concerning this thing. Forgive mine oppoſition to thy croſs, and ſubdue mine impatient deſire to ſhake it off. Holy Father, mortify my will, and make it bow to thine. Thy will be done in me, and by me. Purge me, and make me fruitful under the croſs. Chaſten me, that I may be a partaker of thy holineſs. I bleſs thee, O my God, for the deſire which I have to keep up communion with thee in my ſufferings. I believe thou art my perfectly reconciled Father in Jeſus, and therefore, truſting to thy love in him, I would take up thy croſs, and expect under it thy covenant bleſſings. Yes, Lord, this is of grace. Thine be the praiſe for ſhewing me the need of ſuffering, and of renewing me by it in the inward man to a conformity to thy holy will. I now ſee thy love herein. It is as much love to crucify the outward man as to renew the inward man. I believe it in my judgment; O bleſſed God, let me experience it in my heart and walk. Order all my croſſes, that they may work together under thee, for thy glory and for my good; and if afflictions abound let conſolations abound alſo. I

have thy promiſe, and I rely upon it. Let it be fulfilled unto thy ſervant for thy dear Son's ſake. *Amen* and *Amen*.

This bleſſed communion with the Father and the Son, which the ſanctified uſe of the croſs is made the means of promoting, is maintained by the holy Spirit: he is a perſon in the Godhead co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and with the Son. It is his office to apply and to make effectual all covenant bleſſings. Faith in the Son, and through him, love to the Father, are from his influence. He is the lord and giver of all ſpiritual life, and of every ſpiritual enjoyment; for ſo the apoſtle teaches in his prayer for the Corinthians: "The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Ghoſt, be with you all." This communion of the Holy Ghoſt conſiſted in partaking by his means with the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in his grace, and with the Father in his love. The Holy Ghoſt made the application: he quickened the ſoul, and inſpired the breath of life into it, and on him it depends for every ſpiritual act, as much as the life of the body does on its breathing. Whoever ſtedfaſtly believes in Jeſus under the croſs, and experiences under it the Father's love, has this fellowſhip with the Father and the Son, by the operation of the holy Spirit. Therefore that ſweet grace which bears up with faith in Jeſus, and with patience under the Father's

rod, is ſaid to be from him: "The fruit of the Spirit is *long-ſuffering*;" he enables the ſoul to wait quietly; and if the time be long, and the ſuffering hard, he gives long patience. He does not take away the ſenſe of pain, but he beſtows ſtrength to bear it, and by it he produces a plentiful harveſt of graces and bleſſings. Thus he teaches us himſelf: "Now no chaſtening for the preſent ſeemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheleſs afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs, unto them who are exerciſed thereby." Theſe are the fruits of the Spirit: they are all of his producing; and they are fruits of righteouſneſs, which none can produce but thoſe who are one with Chriſt; and in him righteous before God. Although ſenſe cannot perceive how they ſhould grow or ripen upon the croſs of Chriſt, yet faith can. The promiſe is ſure; and waiting faith, exerciſed with ſuffering, finds many promiſed fruits. O my ſoul, conſider this precious ſcripture, and with cloſe attention. Study it. Treaſure it up in thy heart. It contains a rich cordial for the afflicted.---Obſerve, there is love in ſending the croſs, love to be manifeſted by it, and heavenly fruits of love to grow upon it. Why then is ſuffering ſo hard? Why art thou ſo little profited by it? Is it not generally barren, becauſe thou art not looking to the word of promiſe, and depending upon the holy Spirit to give thee the promiſed fruit? Aſk thy-

ſelf therefore, eſpecially in the hour of ſuffering: Am I now expecting the communion of the Holy Ghoſt, that by his grace I may partake with the Son in his ſalvation, and with the Father in his love? Is this my preſent experience? There is no bearing the croſs without it. Art thou then, O my ſoul, truſting to him for this happy fellowſhip, and hoping that as thou art a branch in the vine, and the huſbandman is now purging thee, thou mayeſt bring forth much fruit? And obſerve what kind of fruit it is. All the effects of being in union with Chriſt, and of having communion with him, are called *fruits of righteouſneſs*. Chriſt is the vine. The branch muſt be one with him before it can live and grow---one with him in his life and death---a partaker of his divine righteouſneſs---and then the branch abiding in him by the influence of the holy Spirit will be made fruitful in love, joy, peace, long-ſuffering, gentleneſs, goodneſs, faith, meekneſs, temperance: for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodneſs and righteouſneſs and truth. He brings forth all the fruit that is to the glory of God---And it is all *peaceable* fruit: for it is produced by him in conſequence of covenant-love, by which the Father is revealed as the God of peace, and the Son as the great peace-maker; and when the holy Spirit enables the poor ſinner to believe this, then he gives him joy and peace in believing---being juſtified by faith, he has

peace with God through Jeſus Chriſt. The croſs ſoon comes after this---not to deſtroy, but to try this faith---not to take away, but to confirm this peace---it is ſent to give proof of the ſoundneſs of faith, and to manifeſt the ſweetneſs of divine love: for it comes from the God of peace, and all the fruits which he intends to produce by it are *peaceable*, ſuch as ſhould increaſe the happy ſenſe of peace in the minds of his children. And for this purpoſe the holy Spirit abides with them. He has revealed the Father's love in ſcripture, and he is a faithful witneſs of it to their hearts. He ſheds it abroad, and ſatisfies them of it. Yea, he gives them ſenſible experience and enjoyment of it under the croſs. This produces a quiet ſubmiſſion to his will, and an humble dependence upon his power; which are manifeſted by waiting upon God in all ways and means for the grace promiſed to his afflicted children. The croſs requires great grace, and therefore calls forth much prayer. Suffering times are praying times. The croſs brings ſinners upon their knees---Manaſſeh in affliction entreated the Lord---ſo did Paul---Behold, he prayeth. It keeps believers upon their knees, as the prophet witneſſes: "Lord, in trouble have they viſited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chaſtening was upon them." The Lord himſelf declares the ſame: "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge

their offence, and ſeek my face; in their affliction they will ſeek me early." Accordingly they did ſeek him: "Come," ſay they, "and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn and he will heal us; he hath ſmitten and he will bind us up." O bleſſed fruit of affliction! when ſanctified by the Spirit it teaches the children of God to pray fervently, and to continue inſtant in prayer: it diſcovers the weakneſs of the fleſh, and the rebellion of the will; and ſhews the neceſſity of drawing near to God for ſtrength and patience. It keeps the mind in a praying frame, expecting, by the grace of the Spirit, communion with the Father and the Son. The croſs makes this communion neceſſary. It cannot be endured without a belief of the Father's love in Jeſus, and therefore the Spirit of prayer keeps this belief in exerciſe, and enables the ſoul to plead the promiſe of ſtrength, to endure patiently, and to bring forth much fruit. The promiſe cannot fail. They who truſt in it cannot be diſappointed, but ſhall find grace to help in time of need. As prayer is thus neceſſary, ſo the holy Spirit generally makes it ſweet under the croſs. Is any afflicted among you? Let him pray. Prayer is the appointed means of his comfort. If affliction ſend him to God, God will meet him, and make him joyful in his houſe of prayer. How encouraging are theſe words: "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh

to you." In every caſe of diſtreſs, draw nigh in faith to God: he is a very preſent help. Seek his face, and you will find him near unto you: for the Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him; nigh to hear, to anſwer, and to comfort. Thus his promiſe runs: "Then ſhalt thou call, and the Lord ſhall anſwer; thou ſhalt cry, and he ſhall ſay, here I am." What is your burden? I am preſent to give ſtrength to bear it. What is your grief? Here are my comforts. Do your tribulations abound? Here are my conſolations abounding alſo. Here I am. Aſk what you will, believing, and it ſhall be done unto you. O what times of refreſhing are theſe! The Holy Ghoſt ſenſibly comforts the afflicted. When they draw nigh to God, he is preſent to make their hearts joyful. He diſpels their darkneſs with the light of his countenance, and turns their mourning into joy. And thus they have not only communion with God in prayer, but alſo ſuch communications of his heavenly love, that they can often ſay. It is good for us that we have been in trouble.

In times of trouble, the WORD alſo is generally ſweet. All people in diſtreſs look out for ſome comfort: and the holy Spirit directs believers to the ſcriptures: "Whatſoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the ſcriptures, might have hope." The afflicted feel their

want of patience and comfort, which puts them upon careful hearing and reading of the good word of God. They want to know what it ſays of their caſe; and when they meet a ſuitable promiſe, then they have a ground of hope. Their preſent trials require them to ſeek for ſomething more than the truth of the promiſe. This being credited, they therefore expect the promiſed bleſſing. When the famine was in Canaan, Jacob and his family could not have been kept alive by believing that there was corn in Egypt: they muſt either fetch it or die. Trouble calls for the experience of the promiſed bleſſings, and when they are received at ſuch a time they are ſweet indeed. They feel as eaſe does after pain. When the holy Spirit applies the comfort, the promiſe, by which he applies it, is precious. It is like a reviving cordial to a fainting heart. O how ſweet are thy words unto my taſte, yea, ſweeter than honey unto my mouth. Honey is ſweet, but the word is ſweeter. When, through patience, and comfort of the ſcriptures, the afflicted believer enjoys the good of the promiſe, then he can ſay—Now I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulneſs haſt afflicted me: let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindneſs be for my comfort, according to thy word unto thy ſervant.

Sweet is the comfort which the afflicted receive from God the Comforter, under the

croſs; not only *in* ſuffering, but alſo *after* it. AFTERWARD alſo "it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteouſneſs." He who carries the croſs of Chriſt, does not labour in vain, and ſpend his ſtrength for nought; but he is bearing forth good ſeed. If he ſow it in tears, yet he ſhall reap in joy. The Lord looks at the fruit, and intends to bring forth much of it by the croſs: we are apt to look at the ſuffering and to forget the fruit. He has the end in view in the uſe of all means; and the holy Spirit has revealed this clearly, that we might depend upon him for receiving the proper fruit of affliction. The Lord ſays, he led his people through the great and terrible wilderneſs, wherein were fiery flying ſerpents and ſcorpions, and drought; that he might humble them, and that he might prove them, to do them good AT THE LATTER END. He intended to do them good. This was firſt in his heart. Then the way in which he would do it: he would lead them through many afflictions, by which they ſhould find, *at the latter end*, how good God was to them. The promiſe of this was their encouragement to bear the croſs, till they reaped the fruit. In like manner the Lord ſays to the afflicted Jews: "I know the thoughts that I think towards you," ſaith the Lord; "thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you AN EXPECTED END"---ſuch an end as you would wiſh, and, having my promiſe, ſuch as you

may ſafely hope for---my thoughts indeed are not as your thoughts---you think I have caſt you off, and that your preſent croſs is to cruſh you---no, I mean to do you good by it---and ſo the end will prove---wait a little in faith, and all will come to a happy iſſue.

Are theſe ſcriptures the truth of God? Has the eternal Spirit promiſed in them, that although the bearing of the croſs be very painful, yet it is very profitable? Will he afterwards cauſe them to bring forth much fruit, who have been exerciſed with it? Art thou then waiting, O my ſoul, under all thy troubles for the promiſed end? Doſt thou expect it, and in patience tarry the Lord's leiſure? Canſt thou look back, and ſee how merciful the dealings of thy God have been---how gracious his rod---how loving his correction? Canſt thou look forward under every croſs, perſuaded that God will do thee good at the latter end? That he will cauſe many peaceable fruits to grow upon this ſeemingly barren tree? Yea, that theſe light afflictions, which are but for a moment, ſhall work for thee an eternal weight of glory, far more excellent than can be conceived? O God the Holy Ghoſt, I do believe it: I would not doubt of the truth of the promiſe in thy word, nor of the truth of thy grace in my heart. I therefore beſeech thee, O thou Spirit Jehovah, to enable me to keep up communion with thee

in all my trials, that I may bring forth thoſe peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs. Thou art the giver of every grace. I acknowledge thee to be the author of my ſpiritual life: I was dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, and thou haſt quickened me. It is of thy mere gift that I have any faith, and that upon the trial it was found to be true faith: I bleſs thee for this grace, and humbly pray for the continuance and for the increaſe of it. Meet me in the uſe of all means, and enable me to grow in faith, rooted and grounded in Chriſt Jeſus, that I may alſo grow in love to his Father and to my Father. O thou divine revealer of his heavenly love, ſhed it abroad more abundantly in my heart, that I may learn more reſignation to his will, more ſubjection to his authority, and more ſubmiſſion to his rod. I acknowledge thee, O holy-making Spirit, to be the teacher of patience, and what I have learned was thy revelation. It was in thy ſtrength that I was enabled to go on with any quietneſs bearing my croſs. Thy grace made me willing, and nothing elſe can keep me willing, to have the fleſh crucified with its affections and luſts. O God, put forth thine almighty power, and enable me to part with every thing which would hinder my fellowſhip with the Father and the Son. I deſire ſo to walk this day, as to have growing fellowſhip with the eternal Three, and I deſire it through thine influence. O God the Holy Ghoſt, carry on

thy work. Exalt and purify my faith and patience and every grace: if it be thy will to do this under the croſs, O make me willing and able to bear it. Let every croſs bring forth richer and riper fruit, until thou give me an exceeding great and eternal harveſt of glory. I aſk this in the name of Jeſus, and I expect an anſwer of grace through the Father's love in him, to whom with thee, O bleſſed Spirit, three perſons in one Godhead, be equal glory, worſhip, and praiſe, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Meditate, O my ſoul, with ſerioufneſs, upon this great ſubject. Study the ſcripture account of the croſs. The knowledge of it enters into the very eſſence of the peace and comfort of thy walk. Thou canſt not run away from the croſs: thou canſt not caſt it off: remember if thou wilt be Chriſt's diſciple, thou muſt take it up daily and follow him. If it be very heavy and very grievous, yet it will not hinder thee from following him. He carried the heavieſt part for thee---he endured the curſe and puniſhment due to thy ſins---he left no wrath for thee to ſuffer. ---Bleſſed be his love, the croſs has no curſe in it now---thy ſufferings are all ſent from love---and his love will help thee to bear them, and to profit by them: for he has promiſed to bleſs and ſanctify them to his people. And he makes them a bleſſing indeed. Never, on this ſide of heaven, does he give them ſuch near and happy commu-

nion with himſelf, as under the croſs. O read, then, and ſtudy what is revealed in ſcripture concerning it. Go over it again and again. Learn well, and inwardly digeſt the doctrine of the croſs of Chriſt---the neceſſity---the benefit---the bleſſings of it. Meditate and feed upon the ſweet promiſes relating to it: mix faith with them, that they may nouriſh and ſtrengthen thee in time of need. But never forget, that thy croſs, be it what it will, is appointed for thee in covenant love. It is the portion allotted thee by thy heavenly Father---decreed, in weight and meaſure, to an atom---thou ſhalt not bear it one moment longer than he has determined---and many precious fruits it ſhall produce. Thou wilt find ſuffering times growing times---growth in faith and patience, in mortification to ſin, and in fellowſhip with the ever bleſſed Trinity. The author of thy faith puts it to the trial: it comes out of the lion's den unhurt: it comes out of the fiery furnace refined. God is glorified hereby, and thou art ſtrengthened. He ſends the croſs to teach thee patience, and he continues it for the exerciſe and for the improvement of the ſame grace. He intends, by his chaſtening, to crucify the fleſh, and to mortify thy members which are upon the earth. In love he takes away ſenſual, that he may give thee ſpiritual joys. He does not hate thee, but love guides every ſtroke of his chaſtening. He is only

weakening thine attachment to earthly things, that he may increaſe thy communion with Father, Son, and Spirit. O what bleſſings are theſe! Meditate, O my ſoul, much and often upon them. Pray for the experience of them in time of need; and be aſſured, with all theſe helps, the croſs will be exerciſed hard enough for thy patience. Thou canſt carry it only in the ſtrength of almighty grace. May the Lord ſtrengthen thee from day to day to run the race ſet before thee, till thou win the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus.

CHAP. X.

The believer, exerciſed with the inward croſs, learns to walk more humbly with his God.

THE outward croſs is not always a burden alike heavy. God gives his children a little reſpite. After they have been long tried he ſometimes removes their trouble, and gives them eaſe and outward proſperity. Their ſun ariſes as it does in nature. After many cold and dark days a fine ſeaſon comes---finer for coming after them. The ſky grows clear and ſerene, the air is ſoft and refreſhing, the ſun ſhines with warm and enlivening rays. Every thing looks pleaſant and ſmiles around you. So it is in the kingdom of grace. The believer may not

be always in heavineſs through manifold afflictions. He has his times of refreſhing from the preſence of the Lord. He proſpers, and is in health. The bleſſing of God is upon his ſubſtance. Every thing that he takes in hand ſucceeds. He is happy in his circumſtances, and happy in his family. He ſees the goodneſs of God in theſe mercies, and he is thankful. But if the heavenly Father ſometimes indulge his children with the removal of the outward croſs, yet he never does with the inward. They carry it all their days, and a heavy burden it is. So long as they are in the body, while they are in this tabernacle, they do groan, being burdened: for

The INWARD CROSS is the fault and corruption of ſinful nature, which doth remain in the regenerate, and is their continual grief and plague: becauſe it is always oppoſing their holy and happy walk with God. It is called in ſcripture,

THE FLESH, the whole man being carnal, and full of luſting againſt the Spirit.

THE OLD MAN, being the firſt in us before the new man is created by the Spirit of regeneration.

A BODY OF SIN, made up completely of members and appetites, in which there is not only an abſence of all good, but alſo a propenſity to all evil, inſomuch that nothing can move or ſtir in this body, but what is ſinful.

THE LAW OF SIN, becauſe ſin rules and governs the natural man.

INDWELLING SIN, becauſe it dwells in the whole man, both in ſoul and body.

CONCUPISCENCE, OR LUST, which the apoſtle ſays, he ſhould not have known to be ſin, unleſs the law had ſaid—Thou ſhalt not covet or luſt.

This fallen nature is alſo ſaid to be corrupt according to the deceitful luſts, to be contrary to the Spirit, to rebel againſt the law of God, and not to be ſubject to it, neither indeed can be. This corruption of nature doth remain, according to our reformers, Art 9: "Yea, in them that are regenerated, whereby the luſt of the fleſh, called in Greek *fronema ſarkos*, which ſome do expound, the wiſdom; ſome, ſenſuality; ſome, the affection; ſome, the deſire of the fleſh, is not ſubject to the law of God; and although there is no condemnation for them that believe, and are baptized, yet the apoſtle doth confeſs that concupiſcence and luſt hath of itſelf the nature of ſin." And in the 15th Art. *of Chriſt alone without ſin*, they ſay, "that all we, the reſt, although baptized, and born again in Chriſt, yet offend in many things; and if we ſay we have no ſin, we deceive ourſelves, and the truth is not in us."

The compilers of our articles were holy men, and taught of God. They ſpake his mind and will according to the oracles of truth. And it will be a great comfort to a poor ſoldier, wearied with fighting againſt thoſe luſts which war againſt the ſoul, to

find that the beſt Chriſtians, in every age, have been engaged in the ſame holy war. This will mightily encourage him to take to him the whole armour of God, that he may be able to withſtand in the evil day, and having done all to ſtand.

Attend then, O my ſoul, to the law and to the teſtimony. Pray for the Spirit of wiſdom and revelation. Deſire grace to ſubmit to the truth of God, that whatever he teaches plainly and expreſsly in his word, thou mayeſt believe it, and abide by it. Read and pray, till thou art ſatisfied, and the conviction of thy mind influence thy heart and walk. Art thou to carry the inward croſs all the way to heaven? Is there no diſcharge in this war?---No truce to be made, not even a ceſſation of arms? But art thou to be fighting on the good fight of faith, till the captain of thy ſalvation take thee out of the field of battle? O hard ſervice! To be night and day---at home and abroad---in the cloſet and in the church---at hearing the word and meditating upon it---faſting and praying---at the ſhop and at the exchange---every where and at all times forced to be in arms againſt the aſſaults of indwelling ſin; this is a warfare terrible indeed to fleſh and blood. The length of it---never ended ſo long as breath is in the body. The painfulneſs of it---conſiſting in being at war with a man's ſelf, and in reſiſting his boſom ſins and ſtrongeſt appetites---What diſcouragements are theſe from entering

into, and from continuing in, this battle! Why ſhould it be wondered then, that ſome perſons, who only follow the camp, and are not of it, ſhould repent when they ſee this war, and return to Egypt? or that others, pretending to be on Chriſt's ſide, but never one with him, ſhould dream of ſhaking off this croſs, and of ſitting down here in a land of perfect peace? This is the coward's paradiſe. They want to reſt quiet on this ſide of Jordan, and would not go over with Jeſus to fight for the promiſed land. O dear Saviour, keep thy noble army from this deluſion of Satan: ſo long as they are in the body of ſin and death, make them good ſoldiers of Chriſt Jeſus, reſiſting unto blood, ſtriving againſt ſin. For ſo long muſt we be in this hot battle. It is decreed by the ſovereign will of God—and he is always of one mind. He has revealed it in his word of truth, that the corruption of nature doth remain in his regenerate children; they have an old man and a new, they have fleſh and ſpirit, they have nature and grace, and he has deſcribed the combat, which is to laſt through life between theſe two. The beloved apoſtle bears a clear teſtimony. He is ſpeaking of thoſe whom the blood of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth from all ſin, and who had fellowſhip with the Father and with the Son, and who proved the truth of this by their walking in the light: he puts himſelf among them, and declares: "If we ſay that we have no ſin *now*, we deceive ourſelves,

and the truth is not in us."---If WE ſay---he ſaith not, if *thou* ſay, as if he ſpake of ſome particular perſon---nor if *ye* ſay, as if he intended ordinary Chriſtians alone---But if WE, apoſtles, or whatever we be, ſay ſo; if any of us, if I, for inſtance, ſhould think I had no ſin now, who am a ſaint of a hundred years old: becauſe I was a great favourite of the Lord Chriſt, and have been a great ſufferer for him: or becauſe I have lived blameleſs before men, and have been a witneſs for the truth in my writings, and am ready to ſeal it with my blood: if upon account of any thing done by me, or in me, of any real excellency or attainment, I ſhould fancy myſelf in a ſtate of ſinleſs perfection, the Holy Ghoſt charges me with ſelf-deceit. A dreadful deluſion! ariſing from the pride of my heart, and its rebellion againſt God, and diſcovering the moſt groſs ignorance of God's righteouſneſs in the holy law, and of Chriſt's righteouſneſs in the glorious goſpel: but if I was to ſay as well as to think it; if I ſhould tell any body---Now I have no ſin---I am perfect---Now, at this time, I have received perfect purity of heart: for, ever ſince I received it, I have had nothing ſtirring in me for one year, for two, twenty, forty years, but love, pure love to God---God is in all my thoughts, and nothing but God---I do his will in earth as it is done in heaven: If I ſhould ſay ſo, I ſhould tell a great lie: for I

ſhould deceive myſelf, and the truth would not be in me.

Are theſe indeed the very words of the apoſtle: "If we ſay that we have no ſin now, we deceive ourſelves, and the truth is not in us?" Can no other ſenſe be fairly put upon them, but that the holy John had ſin in him at every given moment of his life? Is this the plain literal meaning of the paſſage? As it certainly is, obſerve then, O my ſoul, the deciſive evidence given here by the Holy Ghoſt concerning the inward croſs. Pray for his teaching, that thou mayeſt underſtand, and pray for his grace, that thou mayeſt profit from this ſcripture. Here is his infallible record concerning St. John and all highly-favoured believers---He aſſerts that there was no time of their lives in which they were free from indwelling ſin: God forbid then that I ſhould think I have no ſin. He avers that if they ſhould ſay they had none, they were deceived; and that if they ſhould ſtand to it, as popiſh myſtics and proteſtant perfectioniſts do, the ſearcher of hearts declares that they lie, and do not the truth---the truth is not in them: for the father of lies has flattered them, and drawn them into ſelf idolatry, with a wicked deſign to corrupt their minds from the ſimplicity that is in Chriſt. Beware, O my ſoul, of this deceit: the Holy Ghoſt has warned thee of it. He foreſaw how the firſt ſin would break out in aftertimes, and pride would perſuade men that they were

perfect in the fleſh; he, therefore, ſo guarded this ſcripture that none can miſtake it, but ſuch as turn away their ears from the truth. He puts all the words in the preſent tenſe, leſt any ſhould think he was ſpeaking of time paſt, or of what men were before the blood of Chriſt had cleanſed them. If we NOW SAY---WE, who now have fellowſhip with the bleſſed Trinity, and are walking in the light of their countenance---ſay that WE NOW HAVE NO SIN, nor had none formerly; he is not ſpeaking of that: if he was (the Holy Choſt underſtands grammar, and can make no miſtake in expreſſing himſelf) he would certainly have uſed the paſt tenſe; but he uſes the preſent, NOW HAVE NO SIN, ſo as not to want the cleanſing blood of Jeſus this moment as much as ever. ---If we have any ſuch thoughts, WE NOW DECEIVE OURSELVES, AND THE TRUTH IS NOT NOW IN US. How forcible and ſtrong is this teſtimony from the mouth of John: and the ſenſe, as well as the grammar, ſhews that he is ſpeaking of believers, and that there is ſin in them: for throughout the chapter he treats of the very ſame perſons, and deſcribes, not what they were before, but what they are ſince they received the grace of God. They were cleanſed from all ſin by the blood of the Lamb; were admitted into communion with the Father and the Son, by the Spirit; and they enjoyed this communion, walking in the light, as

God is in the light---theſe are the perſons here mentioned---of whom God ſays, they had ſin ſtill in them, indwelling ſin, the fault and corruption of nature, ſtill remained in them; and if they fancied it did not, they would be ſadly deceived---they would entirely miſtake the covenant of grace, which was to bring ſinners ſenſible of their wants and miſeries, to live out of themſelves upon the fulneſs of the God-man---they would forget their own character, under which alone they can be ſaved, ſalvation being only for ſinners---they would fall into the crime of the devil, by pride exalting themſelves againſt the perſon and work of the incarnate God---and they would quite pervert the law and the goſpel: for, in order to maintain their inherent perfection, they are forced to legalize the goſpel, and to make it conſiſt of certain terms and conditions, upon the performance of which ſinners ſhall be ſaved; and then, in order to comfort themſelves with their having performed theſe terms and conditions, they are forced to turn rank Antimonians: they leſſen the evil of ſin, they excuſe it in themſelves, and make juſt nothing of it. They call it by ſeveral pretty ſoft names, ſuch as infirmity, frailty, excreſcence, and at laſt they get quite rid of it, by laying it upon the devil, and by terming it an injection of old Satan. And thus they deceive themſelves into perfection, and inſiſt upon it that they have no

ſin, although they have enough in them to damn the whole world. O God, open the eyes of theſe ſelf-deceivers, and bring them into the way of truth.

Such is the clear evidence of the holy Spirit: he aſſerts that the greateſt believers, while in the body, have ſin in them. Doſt thou yield, O my ſoul, to his teſtimony? Art thou fully convinced of it from the work of his grace, as well as from the word of his truth? Doſt thou feel indwelling ſin? Is it the plague of thy heart, and the burden of thy life? When thou art willing to walk humbly with thy God, is it continually in thy way, raiſing objections, putting difficulties, and ſuggeſting hindrances? Is it like a heavy weight preſſing thee down in thy race, that thou canſt not run ſo long, or ſo faſt, as thou couldſt wiſh? Since this is indeed thy daily croſs, and the bearing of it the hardeſt part of thy warfare, O read with diligence the ſcripture account of it. Take notice of the Lord's champions, how they felt under this burden, from whence they derived ſtrength to bear it, and had comfort under it. Hear the man after God's own heart crying out: "Mine iniquities are gone over my head, as a heavy burden; they are too heavy for me"---David had a heavy load: he was ready to ſink, and he could not caſt it off. He could not go into his cloſet, or to the houſe of God; he could not ſit upon his throne, or go in and out

before his family, but this grievous croſs ſo bowed him down greatly, that he went mourning all the day long. The burden of it was intolerable, and would have cruſhed him under it, if he had not learned how to caſt it on the Lord---"Make haſte," ſays he, "to help me, O Lord God of my ſalvation." Here he found relief. The prayer of faith was heard, and God was the ſtrength of his ſalvation.

Under the ſame burden a New Teſtament ſaint went groaning all his days. He had a hard conflict between the fleſh and the ſpirit, and he has left the account of it upon record. Bleſſed be God for the ſeventh chapter of the Romans. We there read of the inward croſs, with which all the children of God are exerciſed. In the very ſame Paul there was delight in the law of God after the inward man; but he found another law in his members, rebelling againſt the law of God---the fleſh, in which dwelleth no good thing, never ceaſed to aſſault the ſpirit with its vile thoughts, legal workings, and rebellious inclinations---when he had a will to do good, he could not do it ſo perfectly as he deſired---his beſt moments were never free from the inroads of indwelling ſin: therefore, in the bitterneſs of his ſoul, he cried out: "O wretched man that I am."---Oh! that ſigh came from the bottom of his heart---I know what he felt---he groaned, being burdened---weary

and tired with this continual conflict, he looked out for deliverance: "Who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?" He ſaw, by faith, his almighty Saviour; and in him expected everlaſting victory: "I thank God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord." He reſted upon Chriſt in the battle, and through him waited for deliverance, knowing that, one day, he ſhould be made more than conqueror.

Well then, O my ſoul, here is comfort. If the corruption of nature be thy croſs, ſo it was to David, and ſo it was to Paul. Thy caſe is not ſingular. It is common to every ſoldier who is fighting under the banner of Chriſt. This croſs is unavoidable, becauſe it is in thy boſom. It is thine inmoſt ſelf—thy whole nature, which is corrupt according to the deceitful luſts. Thou haſt not an atom of thy body, nor the leaſt motion or ſtirring of any faculty in thy ſoul, but ſin is in it; and therefore it is capable of being a plague to the new man. The Holy Ghoſt ſpeaks thus of the inward warfare; "This I ſay then, walk in the ſpirit, and ye ſhall not fulfil the luſts of the fleſh: for the fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh, and theſe are contrary the one to the other, ſo that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Theſe words are addreſſed to the Galatians, who were believers, and called into the liberty of the goſpel, but by falſe teaching they were under

a great temptation. They had begun in the ſpirit, but they thought of being perfected in the fleſh. They ſet out with ſalvation by faith, but expected ſalvation, at laſt, by works. Among other arguments to convince them of their miſtake, here is one unanſwerable, namely, No works of our's can ſave a ſinner, but ſuch as are perfect; no works of our's are perfect, therefore they cannot ſave a ſinner. And that none of them are perfect is certain, becauſe in every one of them there is ſomething of the fleſh, of corrupt nature, as well as ſomething of the ſpirit and of ſpiritual nature. Theſe two are contrary as life and death, and they are always in action, every moment the one luſting againſt the other: ſo that no believer can do the things which he would, ſo perfectly as the holy law requires.

How grievous muſt this inward croſs be to a real believer? For it conſiſts in the oppoſition, which he finds within him, to God and to the things of God. The fleſh ever luſteth againſt the ſpirit, and the old man againſt the new. There is a continual war between theſe contrary powers. The fleſh is a complete body of ſin, armed with every member and inſtrument of rebellion, that can reſiſt the motions and actions of the new man. There is darkneſs in the underſtanding always clouding the light of the glorious goſpel, and therefore we know but in part. The will of the fleſh always op-

poſes the holy will of God. There is enmity in the heart working againſt the love God and of his will. There is pride to weaken humility---anger to oppoſe meekneſs ---the carnal mind to fight againſt ſpiritual-mindedneſs. When the ſpirit is willing the fleſh is weak. When you draw near to God in prayer, the imagination will not be confined: it will wander after a thouſand vain objects. When you are hearing the word, it will diſturb your attention with its unaccountable excurſions. It is ſo ſportive and flighty that you cannot keep it within any bounds. Is it not ſo, O my ſoul? Art thou not ſenſible of this heavy croſs? Doſt thou not find ſomething in thee always reſiſting and weakening the exerciſe of thy graces? and is not this the great plague of thy life? Can there be a greater than to carry about with thee a ſinful nature, daily trying to hinder thee in thy holy walk and happy communion with God? O how much does it concern thee, then, to be well ſkilled in bearing this croſs, and in behaving under it as a good ſoldier of Chriſt Jeſus! And to this end the principles before laid down are abſolutely neceſſary. Without them thou canſt not rightly underſtand the nature of indwelling ſin, and canſt not poſſibly gain victory over it. Only the doctrines of grace received into thy heart, can enable thee to walk with God under this croſs. Call to mind, then, what was agreed

upon in the covenant of the Trinity, and was fulfilled in the perſon and work of Immanuel, for thy peace with the Father, and for thy returning to him in love, and has been applied to thee by the holy Spirit, who has given thee faith in Jeſus, and has manifeſted the love of the Father in him: thou art therefore now one with thy covenant-head---in him complete and perfect, although thou art in thyſelf ſtill a ſinner. Thou haſt a body of ſin, through the luſting of which thou art not able to keep the holy law, according to its full demands, in any one inſtance. But thou art before the Father, what thy ſurety is. He ſees thee in him, without ſpot, or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing---accepted as he is---beloved with the ſame love---looked upon with the ſame joy ---and bleſſed with all ſpiritual bleſſings in him. Thy ſurety lived for thee: thou haſt the righteouſneſs of God for thy juſtification. Thy ſurety died for thee: in him thou art as truly dead unto ſin, as Chriſt himſelf is. Thy ſurety roſe again, and took poſſeſſion of ſpiritual and eternal life for thee. He was delivered for thine offences, and raiſed again for thy juſtification. Thou ſhalt reign with him, as certainly as he has now the crown upon his own head. Such is the perfect ſalvation which is for thee, although thou art ſtill the ſubject of ſin: for thy pardon is without exception or reverſe. ---All treſpaſſes are freely forgiven. Thy

juſtification to life is abſolute: for it is God himſelf that juſtifieth. He choſe thee in Jeſus, that thou ſhouldeſt be holy and without blame before him---and ſo thou art. As a member in his body thou art without blemiſh. Here is thy relief under the inward croſs. The Father choſe thee in his Son, looks upon thee in him, and deals with thee according to covenant love: there is, therefore, now no condemnation to thee, who art in Chriſt Jeſus. With the ſweet ſenſe of this upon thy conſcience, perſuaded that God is at peace with thee, take up the inward croſs. In this delightful view ſee the curſe removed. Thou haſt no reaſon to fear wrath or death or hell. Victory over all ſins and enemies is certain. Daily, eternal victory is promiſed. In this faith follow the noble army who carried this croſs to their graves. Fight as they did, looking unto Jeſus. Sin is in thee: it was in them; but they looked upon it as a vanquiſhed foe, ſlain and put to death, when Jeſus died for ſin once. Likewiſe reckon thou alſo thyſelf to be in him dead unto ſin---freed from the condemning ſentence of the law---freed from the dreadful ſtroke of juſtice by his death---freed as truly as he is---and therefore thou art no more liable than he is to be condemned and puniſhed. And for the ſtrengthening of this faith, ſeek for fellowſhip with him in his death. It is thy privilege, as thou art planted in the likeneſs of his death, to derive power and efficacy from it, daily to

put ſin to death. The more ſtedfaſtly thou believeſt that thou art one with him in his death, the more wilt thou find thy ſinful nature crucified with him. Communion is always according to the faith of union with Chriſt. The ſtrongeſt faith muſt have the ſtrongeſt hold of him, and thereby draw the moſt virtue from him. It is true, as our faith increaſes we become more ſpiritual; and we ſee corruption more, as we ſee motes in the ſun-beams. The ſenſes of the new man, by exerciſe, gain a quicker perception of ſin---we become all over tender as the eye---jealous of the motions---yea, of the appearance of evil. This is real growth. Sin is more felt, in order that the power of Jeſus may be put forth to make us hate it, reſiſt it, and overcome it more. As believers are more ſenſible of their ſinfulneſs in the firſt Adam, ſo they grow up into the ſecond Adam, the Lord from heaven: they bear the croſs of the corruption of the firſt, which leads them to conſtant fellowſhip with the ſecond---in his death, for the pardon of their corruption---in the power of his death, to mortify ſin, that it may not have dominion over them.

Corruption is in thee, and it will ſtrive for dominion. Thy ſins will ſometimes fiercely aſſault. Their allies, the world and the devil, will join them with ſtratagems and force; when the battle is hot, and thou art weak, then it behoves thee to live

by faith upon Jeſus as thy ſurety, now acting for thee in heaven, as he acted for thee upon earth. He has gone up, as thy high-prieſt, to carry thy name within the veil. He bears it upon the ephod on his ſhoulders, and upon the breaſt-plate on his heart: his power and his love are engaged for thee, now he is in glory. He ſtands in the preſence of God, as thy repreſentative. The Father ſees thee in him; and thou art in his ſight what thy forerunner is. As he ſtands there, ſo doſt thou ſtand---righteous as he is righteous---holy as he is holy---beloved as he is beloved---and ſhalt be bleſſed as he is bleſſed. View, by faith, thy nature in him, exalted and glorified, and for the joy ſet before thee in him take up thy croſs. It is a heavy burden---it is a hard warfare. True: but conſider, who ſhall lay any thing to thy charge for indwelling ſin? It is God that juſtifieth thee from it. Who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that died; yea, rather, that has riſen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who alſo maketh interceſſion for thee. He appears in the preſence of God for thee, as thine interceſſor. He is always in court to repreſent thy perſon, and to carry thy cauſe, eſpecially as to what concerns ſin: "If any of us ſin," ſays the beloved diſciple, "we have an advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our ſins:" in this office he is

ſkilful and faithful and compaſſionate. He has thine intereſt at heart---thy faſety, thy comfort, under this croſs, and thy victory over it. His very glory is ſo interwoven with thine, that they are one: yea, the advocate and his clients form but one ſpiritual body, of which every member is what the head is. O my God and Saviour, I bleſs thee and worſhip thee, for acting for me as mine advocate and interceſſor in heaven. Increaſe, I beſeech thee, my faith, that I may ſee more of the glory of thine office, and may make more uſe of it in the bearing of mine inward croſs. O let thy faithful witneſs abide with me, to enable me, without doubt or wavering, to truſt in what thou haſt done for me upon earth, and to draw comfort from what thou art now doing for me in heaven. Into thy hands I deſire to commit my cauſe. Lord, undertake for me. Be ſurety for thy ſervant for good, and guide me with thy counſel, till thou bring me to thy glory. I aſk this for thy mercies' ſake. *Amen.* Is this the true ſtate of the caſe? Is it certain from the word of God? Is it confirmed from matter of fact? Did the higheſt believer upon earth experience this inward croſs? When his conſcience ſummoned him to the bar of God, and put him upon enquiring what he would plead there for his juſtification, had he any thing to urge but the ſacrifice and righteouſneſs of the ever bleſſed Immanuel? And is not

this thy plea, O my ſoul? Doſt thou not find ſo much weakneſs and infirmity in thy holy things, that thou wouldeſt ſeek atonement for the iniquity of them through the interceſſion of the great high-prieſt? And thou wouldeſt not think of ſtanding before the throne, to claim eternal life as the reward due to thine own holineſs. Is not this thine experience? If it be, then take up thy croſs in this

FAITH. It is thy grief that ſin is in thee. The motions and luſtings of it are thy burden. The reſiſting and oppoſing them is thy continual warfare; and thou haſt no proſpect before thee of enjoying perfect deliverance from this heavy croſs, until death releaſe thee. Bleſſed be God for the ſalvation that is in Chriſt Jeſus. There is a proviſion made in the covenant of grace for the pardon of indwelling ſin, for victory over it daily, and for the eternal deſtruction of the whole body of ſin: it ſhall have no exiſtence in the members, any more than it has in their glorified head. Here is a comfort for thee, O my ſoul, of God's own providing, and of God's own applying. When it is applied to thy heart, the croſs will be eaſy. Obſerve carefully what is revealed concerning the being of ſin in the beſt Chriſtians, and concerning the pardon of it. The Holy Ghoſt declares it dwells in them, but they are forgiven all treſpaſſes---they are in Chriſt without ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing --

in the firſt Adam they are heirs of ſin, death, and hell; in the ſecond Adam, the Lord from heaven, they are heirs of righteouſneſs, life, and glory. He is their covenant-head, and they are before God what he is. This is the record of truth---YE ARE COMPLETE IN HIM. Abide by it, O my ſoul; give it full credit, and boldly plead it againſt all the charges of guilt, and fears of wrath.---

"It is true, I have ſin in me, but it is pardoned. God has forgiven me ALL treſpaſſes. I ſtand before him in my ſurety, who undertook for me, and I am perfect in him. The Father choſe me in his Son: he looks upon the face of his beloved, and ſees me in him. In him he is well pleaſed, ſo he is with me. As he loves him, ſo he loves me. This is the glorious privilege which by faith I now enjoy. I deny ſight and ſenſe, and I ſtick to the word of God. I adhere ſtrictly to its teſtimony concerning me, believing myſelf to be dead indeed unto ſin in Chriſt, and in him abſolutely freed from guilt and condemnation. The Father is at peace with me, and he loves me in his Son, and with the ſame love with which he loves him---his Father and my Father. With this perſuaſion I go to war with my corruptions. I ſee their traitorous deſigns. They are fighting againſt every thing that is dear and precious to my ſoul. But having the promiſed grace of the almighty Saviour

for my help, I desire to set upon them in his name. I know he has them among mine other enemies under his feet, and I have his word for it that he will put them under mine. Yea, Lord, I believe, and on thy faithful promise I trust this day. Although I must carry my cross, yet I bless thee and worship thee for removing curse and wrath from it. I can now take it up as thy soldier, and fight against it in thy strength, expecting victory from thee, and to thy glory. O my God, save me from indwelling sin. Let me feel it my burden. Glorify thy grace in me, and by me, that being endued with power from on high I may hold out resisting and conquering it, till thou give me everlasting victory."

If this, O my soul, be thy constant dependence, then the cross will become light. Guilt makes it heavy. The curse in it makes it intolerable: but if by faith thou canst see guilt and curse removed, then it will be no hinderance to thee in thy heavenly walk, but will daily call forth into use and exercise those graces which will help thee forward, and especially

PATIENCE. Here is great need of patience---a continual war---and within thee---thine own bosom the seat of it---and thine own lusts carrying it on, and maintaining it. The more spiritual thou art, the more wilt thou feel this inward conflict. The more thou groweſt into Christ, the more will thy

corruptions ſtir and move---they will be thy continual plague, ſo that thou wilt not be able to draw any comfort from what thou art in thyſelf. Here is exerciſe for patience. Every where indwelling ſin is preſent with thee; upon every temptation ready with its flatteries to entice, and with its power to break out into act and deed. The oppoſing it is like cutting off a right hand, and plucking out a right eye---as contrary to nature, and as painful. The hand and the eye cannot be deſtroyed twice; but inbred luſts, overcome a thouſand times, are not in the leaſt diſcouraged from warring againſt the ſoul. Like the troubled ſea, never at reſt, they are always caſting up ſome ſinful mire and dirt. What canſt thou do without faith in the Redeemer's blood, without patience to wait for the Redeemer's ſtrength? Every moment there is need of faith and patience; and every moment, if theſe graces be exerciſed, they will be improved. The bearing of the croſs continually, and fighting under it on the ſide of God, will alſo be the means of teaching thee

THE TRUE SPIRITUAL MORTIFICATION, which does not conſiſt in ſin not being in thee, nor in its being put upon the croſs daily, nor yet in its being kept upon it. There muſt be ſomething more to eſtabliſh perfect peace in thy conſcience; and that is the teſtimony of God concerning the body of ſin. He has provided for thy perfect

deliverance from it in Chriſt. Every thing needful for this purpoſe was finiſhed by him upon the croſs. He was thy ſurety. He ſuffered for thee. Thy ſins were crucified with him, and nailed to his croſs. They were put to death when he died: for he was thy covenant-head, and thou, as a member of his body, waſt legally repreſented by him, and art indeed dead to ſin by his dying to ſin once. The law has now no more right to condemn thee, a believer, than it has to condemn him. Juſtice is bound to deal with thee, as it has with thy riſen and aſcended Saviour. If thou doſt not thus ſee thy complete mortification in him, ſin will reign in thee. No ſin can be crucified either in heart or life, unleſs it be firſt pardoned in conſcience: becauſe there will be want of faith to receive the ſtrength of Jeſus, by whom alone it can be crucified. If it be not mortified in its guilt, it cannot be ſubdued in its power. If the believer does not ſee his perfect deadneſs to ſin in Jeſus, he will open a wide door to unbelief: and if he be not perſuaded of his completeneſs in Chriſt, he gives room for the attacks of ſelf-righteous and legal tempers. If Chriſt be not all in all; ſelf muſt ſtill be looked upon as ſomething great, and there will be food left for the pride of ſelf-importance and ſelf-ſufficiency. So that he cannot grow into the death of Chriſt, in ſenſible experience, farther than he believes himſelf

to be dead to ſin in Chriſt. The more clearly and ſtedfaſtly he believes this, as the apoſtle did---

I AM CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST, in proportion will he cleave to Chriſt, and receive from him greater power to crucify ſin. This believing view of his abſolute mortification in Chriſt is the true goſpel method of mortifying ſin in our own perſons.

Examine then, O my ſoul, the miſtakes which thou haſt made, and the temptations which thou art under, concerning this leading truth in thy walk. Pray to thy God for his wiſdom to guide thee. Without it thou wilt be afraid where no fear is. Thou wilt be inclined to think this doctrine rather encouraging to ſin: becauſe it ſeems, to carnal reaſon, to take off thy mind from watchfulneſs againſt it, and from praying for victory over it. But be aſſured this is a great error. If thou art not complete in Chriſt, thou never canſt be complete. Seek for the death of ſin where thou wilt, it is not to be found but in his death. Try to conquer it upon any other principle than faith in his death, the very attempt is ſinful, and proves thee to be under the law. Unleſs thou art one with him in his death, there can be no pardon of ſin, and conſequently no victory over it. O fear not then to lay the whole weight of thy ſalvation upon Jeſus. Depend on him, as dying to ſin for thee, and look at thyſelf dead to ſin in him---as

completely dead to it as he is. Read the teſtimony of the holy Spirit. Study the infinite, the everlaſting ſufficiency of his death for thine abſolute freedom from guilt and condemnation. Truſt without wavering; be not afraid to view the everlaſting perfection of thy deliverance in Jeſus, and this will weaken the tyranny, and will crucify the power of ſin. This will, and nothing elſe can. Read the ſixth of the Romans, and pray for the ſpirit of revelation to open it to thee. There thou wilt diſcover the true way to mortify ſin. It is by believing that thou art planted together with Chriſt in his death: from thence only thy pardon flows, from thence thy daily victory is received, and from thence thy eternal victory will be perfected. Fight on; ſoon thou ſhalt be what Chriſt now is. The member ſhall be perfectly like the head. O glorious proſpect! Thou ſhalt be with him, and like him---ſpotleſs and fair as Jeſus, righteous and holy, happy in body and ſoul. Thou ſhalt ſee him as he is, and awaking after his likeneſs, thou ſhalt be ſatisfied with it. Take up thy croſs for the joy here ſet before thee. Bear it in faith. It will be light and eaſy to thy pardoned conſcience: yea, the carrying of it in patience will bring forth many peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs: among the reſt there is one which, in the ſight of God, is of great price, and

which is daily improved by the inward croſs; namely,

HUMILITY, which conſiſts in the right knowledge of ourſelves, not only of what we have been, but alſo of what we now are. The beſt and holieſt man upon the earth has a corrupt fallen nature: he has fleſh ſtill which is always luſting againſt the ſpirit. While he is alive to God he feels it. He is ſenſible of the inward conflict. Dead men indeed feel nothing. A dead corpſe has no ſenſe of the worms which are eating it up. He that has theſe luſts in him, and warring againſt his ſoul, and yet does not feel them, cannot be ſpiritually alive. A natural man has no ſenſe of them, becauſe they are in him as worms in a dead body: juſt ſo it is with the perfectioniſt. But ſo ſoon, and ſo long, as he lives to God, he will perceive them. If he be in happy communion with God, indwelling ſin is preſent to interrupt the enjoyment. If he exerciſe any grace, this beſetting ſin tries to weaken its actings. If he be ſet about any duty, it will hinder him from doing it ſo perfectly as God requires, and as he could wiſh. The abiding ſenſe of theſe truths will keep down pride. The believer will ſee nothing of his own to truſt in; no faith, or hope, or love, no faithfulneſs to grace, no holy obedience; all is ſtained and poluted. He is forced to cry out of his beſt duties---*unclean---unclean*. In this ſchool the diſciple learns to walk

humbly with his God. The more he knows of himſelf, the more humble he becomes. And he grows in this heavenly grace, the more he is acquainted with the mercy of God in Jeſus. This learned by divine teaching keeps the believer meek and lowly in his own eyes. Nothing ſoftens and melts the ſoul into holy tenderneſs like the ſenſe of God's mercy. A man who feels the plague of his own heart is never truly humbled until he be pardoned. But when he is juſtified from all things in Chriſt, in him a partaker of all ſpiritual bleſſings in earth and heaven, when he ſees all his ſalvation of grace, of free ſovereign grace, flowing from the abſolute favour of electing love, and beſtowed upon him, as unworthy an object as ever did or can partake of it, then he becomes truly broken-hearted. Theſe truths, taught of God, bring every high thought into ſubjection to Chriſt Jeſus. The ſoul bows before him, lies low at his feet, proſtrates itſelf before the throne of his grace, and deſires to be kept willing to take all its bleſſings out of his hands, and to uſe them to his glory. This is goſpel humility, the true abaſement of ſpirit, with which a man, ſenſible that he is ſaved by mere mercy, lothes himſelf. And while the experience of indwelling ſin humbles him down to the duſt, it produces, through God's grace, the happieſt effects: for it keeps him in his ſtrong tower and ſanctuary, in which alone he is

SAFE. It is ever reminding him of his need of the blood of ſprinkling---ever ſhewing him his want of a perfect righteouſneſs---and ever preaching to him the neceſſity of his being kept by the power of God. And while he hearkens to theſe leſſons, truſting to Jeſus, he will ſtand faſt, and be eſtabliſhed. The arm of the Lord God almighty will hold him up, and he ſhall be ſafe. While he lives thus out of himſelf, the ſenſe of indwelling ſin will lead him to his true

HAPPINESS, which is all in the fulneſs of the God-man. He will enjoy the more of this, the leſs he finds in himſelf. When he cannot draw comfort from any thing of his own, he will ſeek it more in God. When all the ſtreams are dried up, he will get nearer to the fountain-head, and live more upon it. This is the portion of the Lord's people, and the inheritance of all his ſaints. And in this view indwelling ſin is made the means of promoting their

HOLINESS. They ſee their continual need of Chriſt. They can do nothing without him; but believing their oneneſs with him, they deſire to improve it in experience. Every thing they do keeps them ſenſible of their ſins and wants, and ſhews them the neceſſity of living by the faith of the Son of God. This is true humility. The more they are humbled, the more they receive out of the fulneſs of Jeſus: for he giveth more grace---more, to produce nearer

fellowſhip with him in his death, whereby ſin will be more dead, and in his reſurrection, whereby the ſoul will be more alive to God. So that the humbleſt believer is the neareſt to God; and is the ſafeſt, happieſt, and holieſt of all the men upon earth: becauſe he has moſt fellowſhip with God. He dwells in God, and God in him. Meditate, O my ſoul, upon this uſe of the croſs. Is ſin in thee? Doſt thou feel it, and art thou fighting againſt it? And does not this humble thee? Art thou freely forgiven all treſpaſſes, indwelling ſin among the reſt? Doſt thou know that thou art a ſaved ſinner ---a brand plucked out of hell? And does not this humble thee? I ſee reaſon enough to be humbled, but I feel pride in me luſting againſt humility. O my precious Jeſus, humble me under thy mighty hand. To thee I look for all my ſalvation. Lord, ſave me from pride. Thou haſt made me willing to be taught of thee to be meek and lowly, and I come to thee praying that the diſciple may be as his maſter. O let me drink deep into thy Spirit. In every day's warfare againſt my corruptions, enable me to renounce myſelf, that I may find thou art carrying both me and my croſs. Keep me humbled at thy feet, that thou mayeſt exalt me in due time. I pray to thee, my precious Saviour, for this grace, to mine eternal humbling, and to thine eternal exaltation. In life and death, and for ever-

more, I hope to glory only in the Lord, and to triumph in the God of my ſalvation.

Thus the believer learns to walk humbly under the inward croſs. He is brought to truſt all in the Saviour's hand. Daily he diſcovers more of the ruins of the fall, which lead him to freſh diſcoveries of the perfect ſalvation in Jeſus. If he attend to what is paſſing in his own breaſt, he finds his need of a Saviour every moment, and for every thing; by which means he grows in grace, and in the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus his Lord. He learns to put no confidence in the fleſh; but to rejoice only in his completeneſs in Jeſus, from whom all his comforts and victories are received. Thus, while ſelf is laid low, the Saviour is exalted, and his perfect work is more depended on. The believer, by hope and love, obtains more delightful communion with his God. Indwelling ſin is his croſs; but he bears it, looking unto Jeſus; from whom he receives ſtrength to go on, yea, to run the race ſet before him. By faith he ſees in Jeſus the corruption of his nature condemned and dead in law: he beholds himſelf freed from this, as well as from his other ſins. Guilt is the moſt galling part of this croſs; but when guilt is thus removed from the conſcience, then the croſs grows light. When taken up in faith, and carried in love to the almighty Saviour, then it does not ſtop the believer in his fellowſhip

with Jeſus, or in his happy walk with him. Glory be to thee, my Lord, of this I have ſome experience. Yes, precious Jeſus, I know the infinite value of that ſacrifice which put away ſin. I bleſs thee for that offering which perfects for ever. Intereſted in it, I would not diſtruſt my completeneſs in thee. Through thy holy nature I expect to be renewed after thy likeneſs. The fountain for cleanſing from the filth of ſin ſtands open; in it I daily waſh my ſpotted ſoul. In thy divine righteouſneſs I ſee the law and juſtice of the Father infinitely honoured by juſtifying me, and dealing with me as perfectly righteous. Complete in thee I am. In thy work finiſhed upon earth I am perfect, and am repreſented as ſuch by thee in heaven. I believe thou appeareſt there as my divine interceſſor, bearing my name upon thy ſhoulders and upon thy breaſt, with a glory beyond all the precious ſtones in the world. O my bleſſed Jeſus, increaſe this faith. Lead me from faith to faith, that, while I am travelling heavenwards, mine eye and my heart may be more ſimply fixed upon thee. Come thou glorifier of the Saviour, and diſcover to me more of the ſinfulneſs of ſin, and of my need of his ſalvation. Holy Spirit, teach me, in the deepeſt ſenſe of indwelling ſin, to truſt wholly to the offering of the body of Jeſus. O lead me to his croſs, there to ſee all my ſins nailed, crucified with him, dead in his

death, buried in his grave; in this faith ſtrengthen me mightily to reſiſt and to conquer my corruptions. Enable me to experience the power of his croſs, that I may feel ſin weakened in the love and in the practice of it. Almighty Spirit, in my daily warfare I find no ſtrength leſs than thine can make me conqueror; and therein thou haſt cauſed me to put my truſt. Awake, awake; put on ſtrength, O arm of the Lord; awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that cut the pride of nature to pieces, and wounded the old dragon? O my God, magnify thine arm in ſubduing every ſin. Thou ſeeſt my naked heart, and its ſighings are not hid from thee. My corruptions are indeed my croſs; and they would have been a ſore burden, too heavy for me to bear, if the curſe had not been taken out of them. But ſtill, pardoned as they are, yet in this tabernacle I do groan, being burdened. I believe the day is coming when I ſhall have perfect and eternal freedom from ſin and ſorrow. The firſt fruits of this only make me long the more for the bleſſed harveſt. But I deſire to wait in hope, bearing my croſs, till thy will be done. O Lord, make me willing to reſiſt, give me power to overcome, indwelling ſin, till the day of redemption, and mortality be ſwallowed up of life. Hear me, my good God, and anſwer me, for thy name's ſake, to the glory of Father, Son, and Spirit,

the three in one Jehovah, to whom my heart now bows in worſhip, and my ſoul hopes ſoon to join the ſong of never-ceaſing praiſe. *Amen*, and *Amen*.

CHAP. XI.

The believer fights the good fight of faith, and goes forth conquering and to conquer.

WHEN the believer has been diſciplined under the croſs, and has learned to bear it with patience, the Captain of his ſalvation has other exerciſes for him. He has choſen him to be a ſoldier, and he intends to teach him to endure hardneſs. His life in Chriſt is one continued battle, not only againſt fleſh and blood, but alſo againſt principalities and powers of earth and hell: he cannot diſcover their ſtratagems, nor overcome their aſſaults, but by being ſtrong in the grace that is in Chriſt Jeſus. His warfare is therefore to be carried on entirely by faith. The principles before laid down muſt be brought into uſe. What the Spirit of God had diſcovered to him of his ſalvation in Jeſus is to be tried in every battle; and if it be maintained, it will be improved. If he hold faſt the confidence of his faith, he will behave like a good ſoldier. If he always take up arms in abſolute dependance on the

divine General, to give him courage, to order him how to attack his enemies, to beſtow ſtrength upon him daily to reſiſt them, then victory will be certain. Yea, he will be invincible while he ſtands ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. He will meditate upon the principles which he had been taught of God, and will find peace in his own conſcience, and joy in his heart, by bringing them into daily experience. His believing views of the warfare to which he is called will be ſuch as theſe---

I am, through ſovereign grace, called to fight under the banner of Jeſus---He has not left me to fight as uncertainly, but he has conquered all mine enemies for me, and he has undertaken to conquer them all in me. It is true, I am weak; but my Redeemer is ſtrong; the Lord of hoſts is his name. He has ſaved me from my ſins, from the ſhame and pain of them, from the wicked one, and the wicked world, from the curſe of the law, and from the wrath of God. He has given me a divine righteouſneſs for my juſtification, and in it I am accepted before the throne: he has put it upon me for ornament and defence---it is a garment of ſalvation---which cannot be loſt upon earth, and which will ſhine with never-fading beauty in heaven. The Father is perfectly reconciled, and loves me with a love that paſſes knowledge. I believe it. God is on my ſide: I need not fear what any enemy can do unto

me. He has taken me into his protection. By his alwiſe counſel I am guided; by his almighty arm I am defended. My battles are the Lord's. Indeed mine enemies are many, and they are too cunning and too mighty for me. But why do they now fight againſt me? Is it not becauſe God is my friend? They hate me becauſe he loves me. While I lived in friendſhip with them, and was at war with God, they were always trying to make me happy: but ever ſince I fled to Jeſus for refuge, and ſought redemption in his blood, they have taken up arms againſt me; and they have raged more furiouſly ſince I was enabled to believe in him. But I have no reaſon to fear their oppoſition. With them is an arm of fleſh, but with me is the Lord my God to help me, and to fight my battles. I may therefore go to my daily warfare in faith, regarding the commands, waiting for the fulfilling of the promiſes of my God, and relying upon the proviſion which he has made for my preſent and for mine eternal victory.

Are thy meditations, O my ſoul, like theſe upon the Chriſtian warfare? Examine thyſelf. If thou art at peace with God, thou muſt expect war. It is unavoidable. If it be in thy heart to pleaſe him who hath choſen thee to be a ſoldier, then all the powers of wickedneſs will be in arms. Night and day, with never-ceaſing rage, they will purſue thee. Deep-laid plans will be formed, and

fierce aſſaults will be made againſt thy true happineſs. They will be attempting, ſo long as thou art in the world, by ſome cunning or force, to draw thee from thy God. Thy life, from henceforth, is to be one continued battle. Thy victory depends every moment upon holding faſt thy confidence in God: and therefore thou muſt bring the principles of the doctrine of Chriſt into exerciſe. Thou haſt ſeen how neceſſary they are for every ſtep of thy walk, and thou wilt find them equally neceſſary for every part of thy warfare. This is a leading truth: thine enemies are God's enemies. Once thou didſt join with them, and waſt on their ſide fighting againſt God, but he has ſaved thee from the guilt of thy rebellion. In free love he choſe thee in his Son, and in ſovereign mercy gave him for thee. The Son rejoiced to do his Father's will for thy ſalvation: he did it in his life; he ſuffered it in his death. The ever glorious work is finiſhed; and it is given thee on the behalf of Chriſt to believe. The Lord the Spirit has ſatisfied thy conſcience, and has comforted thy heart with the knowledge of this perfect ſalvation. The Father is thy father in Jeſus---thine by his own free gift---thine by his own unchangeable purpoſe---and now thine by thy free choice. He has made thee willing in the day of his power to take him for thy God. He is perfectly reconciled unto thee in his Son: and ſhould not this perfectly reconcile thee

to him? His love to thee is wonderful in all its properties, in its riſe and origin, and in its free and full communication of every covenant bleſſing. And does not the belief of this engage thy heart in love to God? Doſt thou not love him for his love to thee, and is it not thy daily prayer that thy love may abound yet more and more? Has not the ſenſe of this peace and love been improved in thy daily walk with him? Haſt thou not found the truth, and enjoyed the comfort of theſe graces in thine experience? O fear not then, ſince God is on thy ſide---fear not, O my ſoul, to go to war with any enemy, who would rob thee of the peace of God in thy conſcience, or of the love of God in thy heart. This is the deſign of all thoſe who fight againſt thee. They want to ſhake thy confidence in God, and ſo to draw thee from him. They know they cannot ſucceed while thou ſtandeſt ſtrong in the Lord, truſting to his being thy reconciled God, and loving Father. O keep this truſt in him, as the apple of thine eye---bind it continually to thy heart in love---and fight for it as for thy precious life. Be aſſured no enemies can prevail againſt thee, until they have firſt overcome thy faith: becauſe while thou makeſt God thy refuge and ſtrength, his almighty arm will be thy defence. "Be not afraid," ſays he, "I am with thee, and I will keep thee by my power, through faith, unto ſalvation."

In this warfare, it is the chief buſineſs of the believer to have reſpect to the orders given him. He is entirely to depend on the captain of his ſalvation. What has he ſaid, O my ſoul, to encourage thee to go to battle without fear? Mind his deſcription---it is THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH in which thou art engaged. By faith thou art to attack thy foes; by faith alone thou canſt conquer them; and faith muſt have his

COMMANDS, or elſe it can have no lawful warrant to fight, and no juſt ground to expect victory. Indeed, if he had ſpoken nothing, there could have been no faith: for his word comes firſt---it is ſpoken---it is heard---and then faith comes by hearing. Look well then to his word. Study it carefully. If thou obey it aright, thou art abſolutely ſafe in the hotteſt battle; and thy victory is as certain as if the crown was already upon thy head. Theſe are his ſtanding orders: "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not afraid, for I am thy God: I will ſtrengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteouſneſs. Behold, all they that were incenſed againſt thee ſhall be aſhamed and confounded; they ſhall be as nothing, and they that ſtrive with thee ſhall periſh. Thou ſhalt ſeek them, and ſhalt not find them, even them that contended with thee: they that war againſt thee ſhall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought: for the Lord thy

God will hold thy right hand, ſaying unto thee---fear not, I will help thee. Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Iſrael: I will help thee, ſaith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Iſrael." Are theſe indeed the words of God? Does he command poor worms, weak and defenceleſs, to go to war without fear? Does he encourage them to look up to his arm, promiſing to be on their ſide? Yes, the Lord of hoſts fights for them. All their enemies are his, and therefore they may ſafely truſt, and not be afraid. O my ſoul, read carefully, read again and again, mark and inwardly digeſt every word of this divine command; and in obedience to it expect his help. Face thine enemies, whoever they be, with holy boldneſs: for God is with thee. He has undertaken to fight thy battles. Look at this ſcripture. Canſt thou meditate on it, and yet be afraid? Of whom, or of what? O vile unbelieving fear! Beg of God to ſave thee from it. Honour the Captain of thy ſalvation. Truſt him. Doubt not but thou art as ſafe, obeying his orders and expecting his help, as almighty power can make thee. Obſerve the courage of one of thy fellow-ſoldiers. Obſerve his victory: "When I cry unto thee, then ſhall mine enemies be turned back: this I know, for God is on my ſide. In God will I praiſe his word; in the Lord will I praiſe his word: in God have I put my

truſt, I will not be afraid what man can do unto me." The enemies of David came to ſwallow him up, but he encouraged himſelf in the Lord his God. He attended to his orders. He conſidered the word which was ſpoken to him. He depended upon it, and had reaſon to praiſe God for his faithfulneſs: for God fulfilled it unto him. There was in it a

PROMISE, as well as a command---do this---and I will be with thee. The promiſe is always made good to them who keep the command in faith. The one is our divine warrant to fight, the other is our encouragement to fight in certain hopes of victory. Attend, O my ſoul, to the promiſe, and fear not the accompliſhment of it: "In righteouſneſs ſhalt thou be eſtabliſhed; thou ſhalt be far from oppreſſion, for thou ſhalt not fear, and from terror, for it ſhall not come near thee. Behold, they ſhall ſurely gather together, but not by me: whoſoever ſhall gather together againſt thee, ſhall fall for thy ſake. Behold, I have created the ſmith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an inſtrument for his work, and I have created the waſter to deſtroy. No weapon that is formed againſt thee ſhall proſper, and every tongue that ſhall riſe in judgment againſt thee thou ſhalt condemn. This is the heritage of the ſervants of the Lord, and their righteouſneſs is of me, ſaith the Lord." Thou art here

forewarned of thine enemies: they *ſhall* gather againſt thee. But the Lord is not with them. He is thy defender and mighty deliverer, and he will bring all oppoſition to nought for thy ſake. However numerous their hoſts may be, yet they ſhall fall. Whatever weapons of war they may form, yet none of them ſhall proſper. This is the certain heritage of all believers. Their righteouſneſs and their ſtrength is of me, ſaith the Lord---I will fight their battles, and I will never leave them nor forſake them: I will make them daily conquerors, and behold the days come, ſaith the Lord, that I will perform that good thing which I have promiſed them, I will make them more than conquerors.

Is this, O my ſoul, the infailible word of promiſe? Has the Lord of hoſts undertaken to ſtand by his people? Has he engaged to lead them out to war by his wiſdom, to defend them in battle by his power, and to give them eternal victory to the praiſe of his own grace? O what motives are theſe to ſtrengthen thy heart and thy hands. What haſt thou reaſon to fear, ſince the almighty is on thy ſide? The battle is his. If hoſts of enemies oppoſe, yet following his orders, and truſting to his ſtrength, thy victory is infallibly ſure: for then thou wilt fight againſt them ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, and thou wilt be invincible

IN THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD. This armour is the proviſion which God has made for the ſafety of his ſoldiers. He puts it on them, and he keeps it on them. It is a whole armour, a complete defence from head to foot. In great mercy, their God who provided it has revealed to them the uſe of every part. In the ſixth of the Epheſians, the apoſtle has deſcribed it at large. He ſuppoſes them to be acquainted with the Chriſtian doctrines, and to have walked in the comfort of them, and he calls upon them to bring them into practice in their daily warfare: "It only remains, my brethren," ſays he, "that ye be ſtrong in the Lord,"---for no ſtrength leſs than his can keep you---"and in the might of what he is able to do,"---by faith relying upon his promiſe, and truſting to his power---"putting on the whole armour of God,"---that being ſtrengthened mightily by the Spirit in the inner man, ye may be preſerved dependent upon the Lord, and enabled to engage in his ſtrength, and to conquer to his glory. Unleſs you thus rely upon his word and arm, you will not be able to ſtand againſt the wiles of the devil: for we wreſtle not only againſt fleſh and blood, but alſo againſt principalities, againſt powers, againſt the rulers of the darkneſs of this world, againſt ſpiritual wickedneſs in high places: therefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be enabled to with-

ſtand, in the evil day, againſt the combined legions of earth and hell, and after ye have done all to ſtand conquerors in the field of battle, when your enemies are driven out of it. Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth---this is the firſt grace in uſe----

SAVING KNOWLEDGE, which the holy Spirit teaches. He guides believers into all truth neceſſary for their ſalvation. As the military girdle went round the loins, and bound all the armour together, ſo the knowledge of the truth, as it is in Jeſus, binds together all the graces. It is of the eſſence of every one of them---it is light in the underſtanding to diſcover what they are, that they may be received into the heart in love, and that in obeying the truth, their influence may operate upon the life and converſation. When a man is thus taught of God, then he ſees his need of the breaſt-plate of righteouſneſs, and he puts it on; namely the

IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS of the God-man. The breaſt-plate was armour for the vital parts---ſo is the righteouſneſs of Chriſt ---it is a perfect protection from every ſtroke of every enemy. He that wears it upon his heart, believing in the life and death of Immanuel, has armour proof againſt all weapons. If the ſtrength of his adverſaries could be collected into one arm, which was to ſtrike one mighty blow, his breaſt-plate

would ward it off. The armour of God could not be hurt. The ſoldier with it on cannot periſh, but ſhall have everlaſting life. Therefore, covered with this invincible breaſt-plate, he may face the ſtouteſt foes, and attack them without fear. He may march on undaunted, "having his feet ſhod with the preparation of the goſpel of peace."

PEACE WITH GOD, through Jeſus Chriſt, is another grace of the Spirit, which mightily ſtrengthens the inner man. Whoever ſees the truth of the goſpel, and believes it, will diſcover God to be at peace with him, perfectly reconciled to him in Jeſus, and who, out of his fatherly love, will over-rule all things for his good. In the ſenſe of this he may go on with holy boldneſs, as the ſoldier did with his greaves on. When his feet and legs were armed with them, he was not afraid of thorns or briers, of rough roads or ſharp ſpikes. In like manner, the peace which the goſpel brings, carries the Chriſtian ſoldier fearleſs through difficulties. He will march on conquering, if he keep on his greaves. If he maintain peace with God through Jeſus Chriſt, he will not be ſtopped by war, or trouble, or temptation. But he muſt remember, that to every piece of armour faith is eſſentially neceſſary---the girdle is good for nothing without the belief of the truth---the breaſt-plate is no defence without

faith in the righteouſneſs of God our Saviour---the greaves are no more than if the feet were covered with a bit of thin gauze, unleſs faith be mixed with the goſpel: "Therefore TO ALL THESE take the ſhield of faith, wherewith we ſhall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one." What excellent things are here ſpoken of

FAITH, as a grace of the holy Spirit! When they uſed to fight with bows and arrows, the ſoldier could hold up his ſhield and keep himſelf ſafe: ſo the Chriſtian ſoldier, if the fiery darts of Satan fly thick about him, by faith will quench them all. He has much combuſtible within him, and one ſpark would ſet him in a flame, if he had not his ſhield: but armed with it, and oppoſing it to the arrows of the wicked one, he may lift up his head with joy: "For he has the helmet of ſalvation" upon it. The grace here meant is

HOPE, and it is fitly compared to a helmet, which was armour for the head, and a defence for all the ſenſes which are ſeated in the head. It is called the helmet of SALVATION, becauſe it ALWAYS SAVES. It never can be deſtroyed. None of the ſenſes of the ſpiritual man can periſh in this warfare, and therefore it is a hope that maketh not aſhamed. Hope with its helmet on fears no blows. It can truly ſay, I am commanded to be ſtrong and of good

courage, not to be afraid or diſmayed: for the Lord my God is with me, whitherſoever I go. Truſting to this command, hope is in wars and fightings full of glory and immortality. The Lord's orders to march forward are the ground of hope; and this ſupplies him with a weapon which none of his enemies can withſtand, even the ſword of the Spirit, "which is the WORD OF GOD." The ſcripture is called a ſword---(an offenſive weapon---and it is the only one which a Chriſtian ſoldier has---all the reſt being for his defence) becauſe it is mighty, through the Spirit working by it to cut off all oppoſers. Our Lord, in combat with the old ſerpent, defeated him with this ſword. And the noble army of his followers, now crowned in glory, overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and *by the word of their teſtimony*---they held faſt their confidence in the word, and with it, as with a two-edged ſword, they ſlew the old dragon, and gained eternal victory over him. Fight againſt him, O my ſoul, with the ſame weapon. Keep the ſword in thy hand. Thou wilt ſtand in need of it every moment againſt that ſubtle foe. The word is the means of overcoming the devil, and it is mighty, through God, when heard and read in faith, and inwardly digeſted by prayer. The beſt ſoldier in the Lord's army is beſt acquainted with the neceſſity of prayer: he not only believes what God ſays of his

armour, but he alſo depends upon him for the daily experience of it: and therefore when he has put his armour on, in the

PRAYER OF FAITH, he calls upon the Captain of his ſalvation for orders, courage, ſtrength, victory, and every thing needful: "Praying always with all prayer and ſupplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perſeverance." O my God, teach me thus to pray. I would depend on thee, and expreſs my dependence without ceaſing: for I am ſenſible that without thee I can do nothing. Although thou haſt choſen me to be a ſoldier, yet I have neither counſel nor ſtrength for war. My fooliſh heart loves eaſe: it would have the crown, but it would be excuſed ſtriving lawfully for it. I find nothing in myſelf that diſpoſes me to endure the hardſhip of the Chriſtian warfare. My whole truſt, therefore, is in thee, Jeſus, my Lord and my God. Thou haſt called me to the battle, thou muſt fit me for it, keep me in it, and make me conqueror. All is of thee. The whole armour of God, which I have received, the ſaving knowledge, the righteouſneſs and the peace, that precious faith and glorious hope, that ſure word, wherein thou haſt cauſed me to put my truſt---theſe are the gifts of thy grace, and on thee, my Jeſus, I entirely depend for the right uſe of them. Thou muſt ſtill cover my head in the day of battle. Mine eyes are lifted up,

to thee, my hopes centre in thee, from whom alone cometh all my ſalvation. O Lord of hoſts, keep me in this ſimple dependence upon thy word and arm, that I may exerciſe thy graces in fighting thy battles; and if thou art pleaſed to give me daily victory, I may be willing to return thee all thy glory. O faithful promiſe-keeping God, ſtand by me, and enable me to hold out, till I finiſh my courſe with joy, and my warfare being ended, I may bleſs thee for evermore for that peace which paſſeth all underſtanding. O grant me this for thy mercies' ſake. *Amen.*

If this be thy dependence, if thou art ſtanding in the Lord's ſtrength, and truſting entirely to his armour, then conſider, O my ſoul, thy ſafety in every battle. If thou go to war, calling upon thy God to be with thee and to give thee victory, then victory is certain. Thou canſt not be conquered, if thou fight in faith, relying upon the orders of thy General, expecting his promiſed help, and waiting for it in prayer, truſting to the armour which he has put upon thee. Is this then thy defence? Doſt thou *pray always* ---begin the good fight---carry it on---and end it with the prayer of faith? Bleſſed be his holy name, ſince this is, in ſome meaſure, thy caſe, go on in his ſtrength, and fear not to fight his battles, who hath choſen thee to be a ſoldier. Be of good courage, and he ſhall ſtrengthen thy heart. The more

bold thou art in thy faith, the ſtronger ſhalt thou be in thy warfare: for whatever thou haſt courage to do at his command, thou ſhalt perform in his ſtrength. And why ſhould a doubt ariſe? Haſt thou forgotten that the great deciſive battle has been fought and won? Immanuel ſtood up the great champion for his people. The almighty warrior entered the liſts with their enemies, and he conquered all their hoſts. He triumphed over Satan and the world, over ſin and death; and he led captivity captive. Remember, he calls upon thee to ſhare in his victory, by faith to partake with him of the ſpoils, and to keep the vanquiſhed enemies daily under thy feet. He has made them his footſtool, and he will make them thine. This is thy warfare. And what haſt thou to fear in it? What hurt can a dead man do thee? If he has a gun charged in his hand he cannot fire it. He is not able to ſtir a finger. No more able is any adverſary to deſtroy thee. Whilſt thou art truſting to the complete victory of Jeſus, thou wilt daily ſhare with him in it. And the more ſimple thy truſt is in him, the greater conqueſt will he give thee, becauſe he will then receive from thee greater glory. How ſhould this conſideration inſpire thee with courage---it is for his glory that thou ſhouldeſt conquer. Thy God commands thee to fight on his ſide, promiſes to aſſiſt thee, has provided invincible armour, and

has, in his own perſon, engaged and defeated every enemy againſt whom thou art to fight; and therefore he requires thee, in obedience to his orders, depending upon his promiſes and armour, to bring him glory by conquering in his ſtrength. O my ſoul, haſt thou not a zeal to promote the honour of thy Saviour? Is not his fame and renown very near thy heart? Doſt thou not think it a privilege to be any ways inſtrumental in exalting his great name? Yes, Lord, thou haſt made me willing to glorify thee. Thou art my lawful king, and I deſire to honour thee by following thine orders, fighting thy battles, and relying entirely upon thy promiſes. I would not queſtion thy faithfulneſs to them, nor fear any enemy againſt whom thou haſt commanded me to fight. I would not doubt of thy ſtrength to carry me through the battle, or to give me the promiſed victory. In this faith I conduct my warfare, and I would have all my ſucceſs to bring freſh glory to thee. I know that the courage which I have in the field of battle is not from nature, but from grace. It ariſes from the belief that I am armed with the whole armour of God, and that the enemies againſt whom I fight, are his as well as mine---his---whom he conquered for me---and is now conquering in me---and all to his own praiſe. From hence, Lord, ariſes my ſure and certain hope of victory. I ground it on thy word. I fight in faith.

I truſt to thy complete victory, and now am ſharing in it. My daily victories are only the fruit and effect of thine. O my almighty Jeſus, give me grace to aſcribe all the glory to thee. It is thy due. Make me willing to give it thee for the victories obtained for me, and in me. O keep me by thine almighty power, through faith, till I have fought the good fight, and won the prize. Grant me this, bleſſed king of ſaints, to thine eternal honour and glory. *Amen.*

CHAP. XII.

The believer marches on, fighting the good fight of faith, and daily gains victory over the world.

THE world ſignifies the viſible frame of nature; not the earth only, but alſo the preſent conſtitution of the univerſe, of animate and inanimate beings: all which were created good at firſt, but, through the ſin of man, and the juſt ſentence of God, are now ſubject to vanity.

The world has become a great enemy to fallen man: becauſe it is always preſenting ſomething to his ſenſes which is a temptation to ſin. It keep him from God by its flatteries, promiſing to make him happy in its enjoyments. It ſets them before him. He looks and loves. He gives his heart a

willing ſacrifice to the world, and ſuffers himſelf to be entirely influenced by its hopes and fears.

While man was innocent, every object raiſed in him ſome ſpiritual idea, and thereby led him to contemplate and adore the great Creator in his works; but upon the fall he loſt this uſe of natural objects; they did not, as they ſtruck upon his ſenſes, excite correſpondent ideas in the mind; becauſe the man was alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that was in him. His underſtanding was in darkneſs; he could not ſee the things of the Spirit of God; neither could he know them, for want of ſpiritual diſcernment. Being thus deprived of the image and likeneſs of God in knowledge, having no will but the will of the fleſh, and his heart being at enmity with God, he ſinks into communion with the creature. His very mind is carnal. His affections are earthly. His purſuits are after temporal things. His enjoyments are in the delights of ſenſe. In this ſtate he lives a mere animal life, without God, in the world.

Indeed he has within him an immortal ſoul, but it is apoſtate. It is fallen from God, and has no more communion with him by nature than the devil has. The law has condemned it to death---the ſoul that ſinneth it ſhall die---and it is already ſpiritually dead to God, being as incapable of

quickening itſelf as a dead corpſe is. Therefore it cannot attain of itſelf any true knowledge of God, or have any real fellowſhip with the things of God. While fallen man is in this ſtate, his earthly and ſenſual appetites take the lead; and all the light in his mind, and the deſires of his heart, only diſpoſe him to ſeek for their preſent gratification. Outward objects offer themſelves to him; they make an impreſſion upon his ſenſes, and ſometimes act upon them very forcibly, ſoliciting and enticing to the enjoyment of ſome fancied good; and ſo long as he continues an unregenerate man, theſe temptations prevail, and keep him from God. He does not ſee God in outward objects. He does not love God for them. He does not enjoy them to the glory of God. God is not in all his thoughts.

Man has been called a microcoſm. He is ſo wonderfully made, that the whole creation comes under the obſervation of ſome of his ſenſes. His eye, by means of light, can diſcover the form and ſurface of all objects. The ear takes in all ſounds. The noſe perceives all vapours and ſmells. The palate taſtes all ſorts of fluids. All ſorts of ſolids come under the ſenſe of feeling, which is in every part of the body, for the benefit and preſervation of the whole. Thus every object in the univerſe is fitted to act upon ſome of the ſenſes, and was intended by the

Creator to excite ſome ſpiritual idea. But this uſe was loſt by the fall. The impreſſion made by outward objects does not raiſe up the mind to God, and excite adoration and praiſe; but keeps the heart from him, and affords a continual temptation to live to the world, and to the things of it. Whatever is preſented to the eye, to the ear, &c. can ſtir up and bring forth evil. And actually does, according to the ſcripture: for "the whole world"---as fallen from God---"lieth in wickedneſs," and is at enmity with him; and therefore believers are commanded: "Love ye not the world, neither the things that are in the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him: for all that is in the world, the luſt of the fleſh, and the luſt of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." Mind, ALL that is in the world is the means of feeding ſome luſt: for which reaſon the apoſtle calls it "this preſent evil world"---evil becauſe of ſin, and becauſe of its temptations to keep the heart in love with it, and to ſhut out the love of the Father.

How awfully ſolemn are theſe ſcriptures! What ſtrict examination, O my ſoul, ſhould they put thee upon! Search and try thyſelf by them, and ſee whether thou art ſaved from the love of the world. It is a bleſſed part of redemption, and it is one of the brighteſt jewels in the Redeemer's crown.

How infinitely glorious is this character: "Jeſus Chriſt gave himſelf for our ſins, that he might deliver us from this preſent evil world." This deliverance is worthy of God. We had ſinned by loving this preſent evil world, and he came to ſave us from our ſins. It ruled over our hearts and lives, and kept us under its tyranny, and he came to deliver us from the love and from the power of it. Thrice happy are they for whom he thus gave himſelf. O my ſoul, read and ſtudy the everlaſting honours of this great victory, and ſee whether thou art indeed a partaker of them? Jehovah was made fleſh for his people, and, as their divine ſurety, came to conquer their enemies, the world among the reſt. He was in their nature, to enter into open war with it, and to overcome every temptation by which it had drawn Adam or any of his deſcendants from God. Thus he was to conquer the world *for* them; and then by his Spirit he was to conquer it *in* them. He began the battle with his firſt breath, and every moment of his life he was victorious. The world has its ſnares for every age and ſtate, but he fell into none of them. His hands were clean; his heart was pure; he never lifted up his ſoul to vanity; he was in his infancy the *holy child* Jeſus; and he grew in wiſdom and ſtature. When he was twelve years old he was wiſer than his teachers; for he ſat in the midſt of the doctors, both hearing

them and aſking them queſtions: and all that heard him were aſtoniſhed at his underſtanding and anſwers. His delight was in the law of the Lord, and in this law did he meditate day and night---He ſaw things as they are there deſcribed in their true nature. The world could not impoſe upon him. He lived above its offers of good. And he feared not the worſt of its threatened evils. When he began his miniſtry he fought a pitched battle, and became an eternal conqueror: the prince of this world was permitted to try every object by which the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eyes, or the pride of life had ſeduced mankind. They were preſented to Chriſt in their richeſt dreſs. The beauty, the pleaſure, the honour, and riches of the world were ſet before him in all their glory. But they made no impreſſion. They did not darken his underſtanding, nor influence his heart, nor provoke any ſenſual appetite. He rejected every pleaſing offer; he withſtood every flattering allurement. Thus he conquered the world; but not for himſelf. His victory over all his temptations was for his people. He accounted their enemies his. He fought their battles. He conquered, as a king for his ſubjects. And he gives them to ſhare with him in his triumph, when they believe in him; for thus he encourages them: "Theſe things have I ſpoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace, in the world ye ſhall have tribulation; but be of

good courage, I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD." The world is your enemy. It had you in bondage, and you could not free yourſelves; therefore I came in your nature, God manifeſt in the fleſh, to conquer it for you; and I have obtained a perfect conqueſt. When I have proclaimed it to your conſciences, and pardoned your idolatrous attachment to the world---when IN me ye have found peace, yet ſtill the world will be your enemy. Becauſe I have choſen you out of it, therefore it will hate you. My peace will occaſion and increaſe your tribulation in it. But fear not. Remember it is a vanquiſhed foe. Attack it in my ſtrength, as partakers of my victory. Fight againſt it, and treat it as under my feet and made my footſtool. Whenever it tempts you, depend abſolutely upon my conqueſt, and you will find my grace almighty, to crucify the world to you, and you to it.

How animating are theſe words! with what courage ſhould they inſpire the Chriſtian ſoldier! Although the world be his enemy, yet it cannot conquer him, and rob him of his crown. The main battle has been fought, the victory is gained, and the conqueror is already crowned in the name and perſon of all the redeemed. By faith he gives them their ſhare in his victory, as it is written: "Whatſoever is born of God, overcometh the world; and this is the

victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Every perſon who is born again by the Spirit has a new nature, ſpiritual and heavenly, and has new ſenſes to exerciſe about ſpiritual things. His renewed faculties were formed for heavenly things, as his bodily ſenſes are for material. By faith he ſees a better world than this, and ſurveys its beauties and glories. He has ears to hear the joyful ſound of goſpel grace, and to receive it. When that name, which is dear and precious above every name, is preached, it is to him as ointment poured forth: the ſweet-ſmelling ſavour refreſhes his heart, and exhilarates his ſpirits. Then he taſtes that the Lord is gracious---foretaſtes his heavenly love, and as truly lays hold of and enjoys its ſpiritual bleſſings as he ever did of any thing material. He is created anew in Chriſt Jeſus, not only that he may know theſe things, but may alſo partake of them ---as truly now by faith as he ever will by ſenſe; and the more he knows and the more he partakes of them, the more will he be delivered from this preſent evil world: "For this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." By faith we ſee the victory of Chriſt, and reſt upon it, and the more ſafely we put our truſt and confidence in it, the more fellowſhip we ſhall have with him in its fruits---more wiſdom to ſee the vanity of the world as he ſaw it---more grace to deliver us from the love of it

---and more ſtrength to ſubdue its temptations. Theſe are ſome of the happy effects of his conqueſts, which he left us to enjoy here, as pledges of our being one day what he now is. He is more than conqueror, ſo ſhall we be, through him that loveth us. As our faith increaſes, we ſhall ſhare more with him, and triumph more over the ſmiles and the frowns of the world.

Since this is the only way to conquer the world, art thou, O my ſoul, conquering it in this way, and haſt thou faith in the victory of Jeſus? Doſt thou depend on him for the pardon of thy former love of the world, and for the crucifying the love of it in thy heart? Art thou relying upon his victorious grace to make thee a daily conqueror over all its temptations? Examine thy warfare, and ſee whether it be carried on according to the ſcripture rule, and with the promiſed ſucceſs? Look at ſome of the Lord's champions. Survey the triumphs of Moſes, and remember the Lord's hand is not ſhortened---"BY FAITH Moſes, when he was come to years, refuſed to be called the ſon of Pharaoh's daughter; chooſing rather to ſuffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon, eſteeming the reproach of Chriſt greater riches than the treaſures of Egypt: for he had reſpect unto the recompence of the reward." How great was this faith! How glorious its victories! It was a divine grace,

and exerciſed by a divine operation---mighty through God. By it Moſes ſaw the reality of heavenly things; by it he taſted their ſweetneſs, enjoyed their bleſſedneſs, and had a hope full of glory and immortality. The world made him its higheſt offers, but he rejected them. His eye was kept ſingle, his heart chaſte towards his God. The honour of Pharaoh's alliance he deſpiſed. He preferred affliction with the people of God to the pleaſures of ſin. He embraced reproach, when it came on him for following Chriſt, and he eſteemed it beyond all the treaſures of Egypt. He ſaw the vanity and emptineſs of earthly enjoyments, and he trampled upon them, having reſpect unto the recompence of the reward. Thus he was crucified to the world. What an exalted character! There is no ſuch hero in the records of prophane hiſtory, but, thank God, there are great numbers in ſacred, who followed the ſteps of his faith. Every ſoldier of Chriſt Jeſus is called to war againſt the world, and every good ſoldier is a daily conqueror. The world is always preſent, and has its temptations ready to ſtop him, but he meets them ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, truſting to the whole armour of God. Then victory is certain. And in order that the Lord may have all the glory, he will keep him fighting and praying in this manner:

This world is not my portion. My hap-

pineſs does not conſiſt in loving and enjoying the things of it. It is an evil world---it lieth in wickedneſs---Satan has his ſeat and throne in it---and it is condemned to fire. Thank God, mine eyes are open to ſee a better world than this, and I am travelling to it.--- I believe it was the purpoſe and will of the eternal Three to chooſe me to be an heir of the world to come. Glory be to the Father for his free choice, and for all the bleſſings of his love. Glory be to the co-equal Son, for his complete and everlaſtingly perfect ſalvation. Glory be to the eternal Spirit, to whom I am indebted for what I believe of the Son's ſalvation, and for what I have experienced of the Father's love. On thee, O God the Holy Ghoſt, I place my dependence for carrying on the work which thou haſt begun. I would be guided by thy counſel every ſtep of my walk, and ſtrengthened by thee for every part of my warfare. Keep me in the right way, and make me conqueror over all the enemies who would ſtop me in it, or turn me out of it; eſpecially deliver mē from this preſent evil world. While I am going through it to a better, preſerve my heart from the love of it. O my God, give me a ſtranger's temper, and a pilgrim's frame. Let me live as a ſojourner here below, that the good things I meet with on my journey may not tempt me to make this my reſt, and the evil things I meet with may not lead me to fret and murmur, as if

God was not my Father, and his heaven my home. O thou divine teacher, ſhew me daily the glory of my Saviour's victory over the world, that I may ſhare with him in it; and enable me to go forth conquering and to conquer, in his ſtrength and to his praiſe. Help me to look upon the world, and to treat it as he did, that, feeling the emptineſs of its offered happineſs, I may with a ſingle heart cleave to my Father in Jeſus, and may be ſaved from the ſpirit of the world. Keep me waiting for my appointed time, ſitting quite looſe and free to the things about me---And let heavenly and eternal things be always preſent to my faith, in their reality and bleſſedneſs, that I may grow more alive to them, and more dead to every thing elſe. Preſerve my heart, O my gracious God; that I may be ſimple with thee when I am in my worldly buſineſs. Enable me to caſt all my cares and burdens on thee, believing thou careſt for me. O daily crucify the world to me, and me to it, that when its offers ſtand in competition with thy love, I may have grace to reject them. In this holy war carry me on glorifying him who hath called me to be a ſoldier. Grant me this for Jeſus' ſake. *Amen* and *Amen*.

CHAP. XIII.

The believer marches on, reſiſting and overcoming the wiles and the aſſaults of the tempter.

SATAN is a continual adverſary. He rebelled againſt the ſovereign will of the Moſt High in heaven, and was caſt out. As ſoon as man was formed, he began to tempt him to rebel againſt God, and he ſucceeded. Ever ſince the revelation was made of the divine purpoſe to redeem ſinners, he has ſet himſelf up againſt it, and with impotent rage oppoſed it. He is always trying to hinder ſinners from coming to the Saviour; and when they are come to him, to hinder them from living by faith upon his fulneſs. On the ſide of Satan are principalities and powers, combined armies and united legions of apoſtate ſpirits---formidable to man for their number---more ſo for their ſubtlety and cunning---they have ſtratagems and wiles, depths of ſkill to deceive---in which they are ſo ſucceſsful that they have deceived the whole world. Their courage is deſperate. They fear nothing: for they were mad enough to take up arms againſt the Almighty. No wonder then that they ſhould be unwearied in their attacks againſt man. They are always upon the watch---ready, as one temptation fails, to preſent another. Their ſtrength is very great---they are

called principalities and powers---rulers and princes---yea, the god of this world, becauſe they work as they pleaſe in the children of diſobedience, whom they keep ſo faſt bound in the chains of ſin, that no human arm can break them aſunder. And it is the only joy they know---the joy of hell---to rivet the chains of ſin upon thoſe poor captives, till they bind them in everlaſting chains of darkneſs.

Theſe, O my ſoul, are thine enemies. They had drawn thee into their rebellion, and they are ſtill trying to draw thee into their torments. They have free acceſs to thy fallen nature. They know how to make uſe of the objects in the world to work upon thy ſenſes, and to ſtir up evil thoughts. They have fiery darts always at hand to throw at thy faith, and reſt not night and day in attacking thy peace and happineſs in Jeſus.

Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul, and all that is within me bleſs his holy name, for undertaking to ſave thee from thoſe enemies. The love of the Father gave his Son to be the woman's ſeed---Jehovah incarnate---for his people. In their nature he was to bruiſe the head of the ſerpent: his cunning, his poiſon, and all his power to hurt, lie in his head: when this is bruiſed, he is defeated. The battle to be fought was foretold, and the victory to be won was promiſed to Adam; and by faith in it, he and all the redeemed in the Old Teſtament conquered

atan. In the fulneſs of time God was manifeſt in the fleſh: he came to deſtroy the works of the devil. Sin is his great work; by it he drew man from God, and by it he keeps man from God. Immanuel began the deſtruction of the works of the devil by taking human nature. His manhood was perfectly holy---it had not, it could not have, any ſin: becauſe God was in Chriſt. There was every thing in his holy life which the law could require. He obeyed all its precepts with uninterrupted conformity, and being co-equal and co-eternal with the Father, his obedience was therefore divine, abſolutely complete, and infinitely ſufficient to juſtify for ever. He was tempted indeed, but he overcame every temptation. He defeated Satan in all his attempts, inſomuch that when he was entering upon the laſt ſcene of his life, he could declare: "The prince of this world cometh, AND HATH NOTHING IN ME." He did come, and the great pitched battle was fought which was to decide for ever, whether the ſeed of the woman or the ſerpent ſhould be crowned conqueror? The battle began in the garden of Gethſemane, and was finiſhed upon mount Calvary. Every ſtratagem of infernal policy was then tried; every aſſault of deviliſh malice was exerted againſt the Captain of our ſalvation: but he conquered them all, as it was foretold: "Thou ſhalt tread upon the lion and

adder; the young lion and the dragon ſhalt thou trample under thy feet." He trod upon the ſerpent's head, and cruſhed it; but, at the ſame time, the ſerpent bit his heel. The heel is his loweſt part---his body ---this fell in the conflict; but he completed his victory by the loſs of his life. The apoſtle ſpeaks of the croſs upon which he bled and died, as the great ſcene of this engagement, and on which he vanquiſhed and triumphed for ever over the powers of hell ---having ſpoiled principalities and powers, and taken away all their armour wherein they truſted; he made a ſhow of them, openly triumphing over them upon the croſs, leading them as you would captives in chains; rebels ſtill, but unable to rob the Lord Chriſt of the glory of any part of his conqueſt. Thus through death he conquered death, and him that had the power of death, that is the devil. O bleſſed and almighty Jeſus, eternal thanks are due to thee for this moſt glorious victory. Satan is now a vanquiſhed foe. He is under thy feet, thou high exalted head of the redeemed. Thou haſt for them, and in their ſtead, overcome all his wiles and aſſaults. He may tempt, but he cannot conquer them. He has no right to accuſe them---thou haſt made an end of ſin. He has no power to torment them---thou haſt brought in everlaſting righteouſneſs. He cannot pluck them out of thy hands---they are dear to

thee, and kept as the apple of thine eye. Glory be to thee, thou wilt ſoon bring them out of the reach of his temptations, and thou wilt be to them an eternal and infinitely perfect Saviour.

In this faith, O my ſoul, thou art called upon to take up arms againſt the old ſerpent. Thou art to fight againſt him under the banner of JESUS---a name terrible to the devil and his angels. Truſting to the victory of Jeſus for thee, and to the ſtrength of Jeſus working in thee, thou art daily to bring him honour and renown. How ſafe, how bleſſed is ſuch a warfare! Thou haſt the wiſdom of thy God and Saviour to diſcover to thee the wiles of Satan. Truſt to it, O my ſoul. Leave thyſelf ſimply to his direction; and although Satan be ſubtle and cunning---although he has depths of policy, and plans out of number, yet thou ſhalt not be ignorant of his devices. Thy all-knowing Saviour will detect his plots, and turn the counſel of that Ahithophel into folly. And if he attack thee as a roaring lion, yet fear him not. Thy Redeemer is ſtrong. He has bruiſed the ſerpent's head; reſiſt him in faith, and thou ſhalt bruiſe it alſo. Lean on the arm of thy Jeſus; depend on his promiſed ſtrength; follow his orders, and thou ſhalt tread Satan under thy feet daily.

But, above all, remember that thou canſt only conquer him by faith---by faith

in the victory of Jeſus, built upon thy faith in the word of Jeſus; for thus the ſcripture teſtifies of the conquerors now round the throne, "that they overcame the devil by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their teſtimony."---They overcame him by depending upon the atoning blood, and by truſting to what the word ſays of its all-ſufficiency to ſave; and they found by experience the promiſed victory. To the ſame effect the apoſtle Peter ſtirs up believers to a ſobriety in the uſe of all creature-comforts, and to a continual watchfulneſs againſt their enemies, in order that they might daily conquer: "Be ſober, be vigilant, becauſe your adverſary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, ſeeking whom he may devour: whom reſiſt STEDFAST IN THE FAITH." This brings victory. The believer reſiſts the devil, and ſtands againſt him ſtedfaſtly in the power of Chriſt. This power is almighty, and therefore faith relying upon it infallibly ſecures victory. The devil may throw his fiery darts thick and faſt, but the ſhield of faith is proof againſt them. It is able, through God, to quench them; ſo that the fire of temptation ſhall not inflame the ſoul. How precious are theſe ſcriptures! How encouraging to the Chriſtian ſoldier! They promiſe him every thing needful for the battle and for victory. Why then ſhouldſt thou doubt, O my ſoul, of the promiſed bleſſings? Take courage.

Fight under the banner of Jeſus. Keep cloſe to his colours. Follow ſtrictly his order: and he will keep Satan under thy feet to-day, and thou ſhalt be more than conqueror over him for ever.

Conſidering thy war with Satan in this light, what is there in it, O my ſoul, to ſtop thee in thy way to heaven? Thou art called upon to fight againſt him, but then it is in the Lord's ſtrength, and as a partaker of his conqueſt. He made all thine enemies his. He fought thy battles. His triumph is thine. Thou mayeſt therefore ſing of victory before every battle. Thou doſt not fight to gain the pardon of thy ſins, or to make thyſelf righteous; but to oppoſe thine adverſary, who would draw thee into ſin, and, if he could, would rob thee of thy righteouſneſs. He hates thee, becauſe Chriſt loves thee. But his hatred is in vain. Thy Saviour has conquered him for thee, and by faith will conquer him in thee: for thou art kept by his almighty power. Truſting to this, go forth ſtrong in the Lord. While thou art living in communion with him, thy warfare will be ſucceſsful. If thou attend to his word, and follow his orders, he will encourage thy heart, and ſtrengthen thy hand with ſuch promiſes as theſe----

I have choſen thee to be a ſoldier, and I ſend thee out to fight againſt all the enemies of thy peace. But thou doſt not go to this

warfare at thine own charges, nor carry it on doubtful of victory. I have provided every thing needful for maintaining the battle, and for bringing thee off conqueror. Thou ſhalt find much profit in this holy war. It will be the means of keeping up conſtant fellowſhip with me. Thou ſhalt ſee thy need of coming to me for courage, for orders, for ſtrength; and by faith thou wilt receive ſenſible experience of my being preſent with thee, and on thy ſide. Only truſt me, and thou ſhalt find me faithful to my promiſe of help and victory. Go forth then to thy daily warfare, and boldly face Satan. Fear him not in the leaſt: for that would betray a doubt of my having him under my feet, or of my putting him under thine. Give not place to him; no, not for a moment: but reſiſt him, and continue to reſiſt him, ſtedfaſt in faith and prayer---truſting to my promiſe, and depending on mine arm. Be ſober, be vigilant. Thus oppoſe the devil, and thou wilt certainly conquer him. And having conquered, fight on. In the fight look to me for victory, having obtained it, expect a freſh battle, and look ſtill to me for victory: and thus go on conquering and to conquer. Thy crown is in my keeping. As ſure as I have it on my head, it ſhall be on thine. Thou ſhalt ſoon ſit down with me on my throne, a crowned conqueror for evermore.

Glory be to thee, my precious Jeſus, for

theſe faithful promiſes, in which thou haſt cauſed me to put my truſt. And now, Lord, let the thing that thou haſt ſpoken concerning thy ſervant be eſtabliſhed, and do as thou haſt ſaid. Thou haſt put it into my heart to deſire to be a good ſoldier, and to fight thy battles againſt all the enemies of thy crown and dignity. O thou glorious Captain of my ſalvation, arm me for my daily warfare with Satan. He is too cunning for me; O my God, teach me his devices. He is too mighty for me, but the ſeed of the woman hath bruiſed his head; yes, almighty Jeſus, thou haſt deſtroyed the devil and his works. I believe in thy victory. O let me partake of its fruits, and daily bring thee honour and renown by my victories. Make me ſtrong in the grace that is in Chriſt Jeſus, that I may not fear Satan: ſend me out againſt him, armed with thine invincible armour. Strengthen me, O my God, that I faint not through the length or ſharpneſs of the battle; but enable me to perſevere, till thou diſcharge me from the war. Thus, in a conſtant dependence upon thee, would I fight the good fight of faith, keeping up communion with thee in every battle, and growing more acquainted with my wants, and more thankful for every ſupply. O my loving Jeſus, increaſe my fellowſhip with thee. I deſire to war a good warfare, and every thing needful for it is from thee. From thy fulneſs I expect it;

and when I receive it, I would uſe it to thy glory. Hear, Lord, and anſwer me, for thy mercies' ſake. *Amen* and *Amen*.

CHAP. XIV.

The believer, kept by the power of God, perſeveres in his holy walk and victorious warfare.

AFTER the believer has made a great progreſs in his walk, and has been very ſucceſsful in his warfare, yet he is not out of the reach of any temptation. He is ſtill liable to be ſtopped in the way of duty. His enemies may cheat him by ſome ſtratagem, or gain ſome advantage over him by open force. While he is attending to theſe things, as they come before him in his daily experience, a thought will often ariſe:

I am afraid my profeſſion will at laſt come to nothing, and I ſhall be a caſt-away. I feel ſo much corruption working in my duties, and my heart is ſo ready to revolt and to turn from the Lord in every battle, that I cannot help being uneaſy about my final ſtate. How can I? it is not in me to hold out and perſevere againſt ſo much oppoſition from within and without? What ſignifies my reſolution to walk forward, or to fight for an uncertain crown? I think I gain no ground. Mine own carnal will

plagues me, and I love eaſe and quiet as much as ever. My corruptions ſeem as many, and mine enemies as ſtrong, as they were. One day, I fear, I ſhall periſh by their hands. My heart faints at the thought. My courage fails me. O wretched man that I am! where, to whom ſhall I look for ſtrength to enable me to hold out unto the end?

No believer is abſolutely free from ſuch an attack; and there are ſeaſons very favourable to it. If his mind be in heavineſs through manifold temptations, and by reaſoning legally upon them; if he be under the hidings of the Lord's countenance, or in a time of deſertion; if he be fallen into any great ſin, perhaps his old beſetting ſin; if the guilt of it be upon his conſcience, and the indignation of God be heavy upon him: then ſuch thoughts find eaſy admittance; and if they be indulged, they greatly diſtreſs the believer: for they directly aſſault his faith, and ſtrike at the very being of his hope. As theſe graces are weakened, he moves ſlowly; and if unbelief prevail, there is a ſtop put to his progreſs in the heavenly road.

Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael, who has made ample proviſion for victory over this temptation. The principles before inſiſted on are now to be brought into practice. Here is a freſh occaſion to try their power and influence, and to make it appear that in

theſe diſtreſſing circumſtances the Father has given his children good ground to rely upon his unchangeable love. He has revealed to them the immutability of his counſel and of his oath, that when they have fled to Jeſus for refuge, they may comfort their hearts and ſay---I have been afraid of falling away, but it is without reaſon: for I have ſtill immutable things to truſt in---although to my ſenſe and feeling every thing ſeems to make againſt me, yet God has promiſed not to leave me nor forſake me. O that I may honour his promiſe, and without doubting relying upon his faithful arm to make it good!

Conſider then, O my ſoul, the principles of the doctrine of Chriſt. Review them carefully. Thou ſeeſt what influence they have upon every ſtep of thy walk, and how mighty they are, through God, to carry thee through all thy difficulties. O ſtudy then the perfect freeneſs and the abſolute ſufficiency of the ſalvation of Jeſus. Read and mark the bonds and ſecurities which a faithful God has given thee to truſt in, and not to be afraid. The time to honour them moſt is to believe them, when thou haſt the leaſt ſenſible evidence: for that is the ſtrongeſt faith. If thou canſt believe upon his bare word, and it is a very good warrant, thy feet ſhall ſtand firm upon the rock, and thy goings ſhall be well ordered: and that thou mayeſt believe this in the hardeſt trials,

God informs thee that thy continuance in grace does not depend on thyſelf. "Thou ſtandeſt by faith:" and faith ſhould direct thee to what God has undertaken and has promiſed to do for thee. He would have thee to place the confidence of thy heart upon his tried word, which is a never-failing foundation, and if thou waſt to build all thy hopes of perſevering upon it, it would quiet thy fears and comfort thy heart. Thou wouldſt then ſee that God has not left thee to thyſelf to ſtand or fall, but has engaged never to leave thee nor forſake thee. He has declared he will not turn away from thee to do thee good, and he will put his fear into thy heart, and thou ſhalt not turn away from him. View thy caſe in this comfortable light, and while thou art conſidering the ſafety of thy perſevering, as revealed in ſcripture for the ground of thy faith, may every promiſe lead thee to truſt more in God, and to truſt leſs to thyſelf, and then the ſnare which was laid for thee will be broken, and thou wilt be delivered.

But take heed of carrying thine opinions to ſcripture, and of forcing it to ſpeak for them. Beware of that common miſtake; and beware of human ſyſtems. Pay no regard to men or names. Simply attend to the promiſes of God concerning thy perſevering. Thy preſent trial has convinced thee that thou canſt not depend on thy own faithfulneſs: this therefore is the time to

learn practically the faithfulneſs of God, and to improve thy faith in it from ſuch ſcripture arguments as theſe:

Firſt, the nature of the divine covenant, which is not only the unchangeable will of the eternal Three, but is alſo their agreement, confirmed by oath, concerning the heirs of promiſe.

The Father loved them as his children, freely, with an everlaſting love: he choſe them and gave them to his Son: he engaged to keep them by his power through faith unto ſalvation.

The Son accepted them, and wrote all their names in his book (not one of them therefore can be loſt); he undertook to be made man, and to live and die for them; to riſe from the dead, to aſcend, and to intercede for them; and he ſitteth as king mediator upon the throne, till every one of them be brought to glory.

The holy Spirit covenanted to carry into execution the purpoſes of the Father's love, and to apply the bleſſings of the Son's ſalvation. He undertook to quicken the heirs of promiſe, to call them effectually, to guide, to ſtrengthen, to ſanctify, and to comfort them; yea, he is not to leave them, till the number of the elect be perfected. Therefore HE ABIDES WITH THEM FOR EVER.

In this covenant the eternal Three have undertaken for every heir of promiſe---to do

all *for* him, and all *in* him---for the means, and for the end---ſo that not one of them can periſh: for faithfulneſs to the covenant is one of the higheſt honours of the Godhead: "I am Jehovah your Alehim which KEEPETH covenant, I will EVER BE MINDFUL of my covenant---My covenant WILL I NOT BREAK, nor alter the thing that has gone out of my mouth." What ſtrong conſolation is there in theſe words! Study them, O my ſoul, that by them thy faith may be eſtabliſhed, and they may do thee good, like a medicine.

Thou art afraid of falling away; but the bleſſed Trinity have undertaken to hold thee up, and their covenant engagements are to be the ground of thy believing that they will fulfil what they have promiſed. Obſerve and adore the goodneſs of God: ſee, how he meets thy doubts, and anſwers thine objections---"An oath for confirmation is among men an end of all ſtrife: wherein God, willing more abundantly to ſhew to the heirs of promiſe the immutability of his counſel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impoſſible for God to lie, we might have a ſtrong conſolation, who have fled for refuge" to Jeſus. Thy faith ſhould run parallel with this promiſe, and ſhould ſafely truſt as far as it warrants thee: now it gives thee ſufficient reaſon to conclude, that thy ſtate before God is immutable, and that he

has determined thou ſhalt not fall away and periſh: for obſerve,

Secondly, his deſign in the covenant. He knew thy frame, thine infirmities, and thy temptations, and therefore he provided the covenant, and promiſed the bleſſings of it upon oath, *for thy ſake*---to end ALL ſtrife in thy conſcience---and to give thee ſtrong conſolation. This was his mind and will. He revealed it for thee, to ſettle thy heart in believing, and to adminiſter to thee great comfort. Weigh attentively each of theſe particulars, and then ſay, what more could have been done to ſatisfy thee of thine immutable perſevering?

But thou thinkeſt, "Such trials as thine are uncommon, and perhaps not provided for in the covenant, and therefore it can be no diſparagement to the divine faithfulneſs if thou ſhouldſt fall away." How can this be, ſince the everlaſting covenant is ORDERED IN ALL THINGS, and on the part of God is abſolutely SURE---nothing that concerns thee is left out of it---not a ſingle hair of thy head---thy trials are all appointed and ordered, and the end alſo which they are to anſwer.

Perhaps, from the clear evidence of the divine record, thou art convinced of the covenant of God to ſave the heirs of promiſe, and of his engaging to keep them that they ſhall never periſh; but thou art afraid thou art not in the covenant, nor an heir of promiſe.

From whence ariſe thy fears? From ſcripture? No; all ſcripture is on thy ſide.---Haſt thou not fled, as a poor ſinner to Jeſus for refuge? Haſt thou not acknowledged his divine nature, and his all-ſufficient work? And though thou art now tempted to doubt, yet ſome faith is ſtill fighting againſt unbelief? Theſe are covenant bleſſings. O look up then to Jeſus---why not THY Jeſus? But however look to him---keep looking on ---and he will give thee reaſon to be aſhamed of thy doubts and fears.

But the Lord hides himſelf from me, and therefore I fear I am not in his favour.---This objection is anſwered in the charter of grace: I WILL NOT TURN AWAY FROM DOING THEE GOOD. He has hidden his face, and thou art troubled: this trouble is for good. It ſhould put thee upon enquiring into the reaſon for God's hiding himſelf. It ſhould humble thee, and ſhould exerciſe thy faith upon ſuch a ſcripture as this: "For the iniquity of his covetouſneſs was I wroth, and ſmote him; I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart: I have ſeen his ways and will heal him; I will lead him alſo, and will reſtore comforts to him and to his mourners."---Although he hid himſelf, yet he had love to his people: although he ſmote them, yet it was with a fatherly correction. But

Thou feareſt God not only hides his face, but has alſo quite forſaken thee: he may, as

to thy ſenſe and feeiing, but not as to his own purpoſe, which changeth not. Hear how he ſpeaks to thee, and ſilences thy doubts: "For a ſmall moment have I forſaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee: in a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlaſting kindneſs will I have mercy on thee, ſaith the Lord thy Redeemer." How gracious is thy God! What infinite mercy is it, that he ſhould give thee ſuch promiſes, ſo ſuited to the trials of thy faith, to preſerve thee under them, and to bring thee out of them! Read carefully, over and over again, theſe promiſes; and may every reading of them diſperſe the cloud of unbelief, until thy ſoul be enlivened with the light of the Lord's loving countenance.

But perhaps thou art in a worſe caſe, as to thine own apprehenſion: Thou thinkeſt, "God is incenſed againſt me, and juſtly---he has caſt me off, and I can expect no more favour at his hand: once, indeed, I thought he loved me, but I have fallen into a great ſin---an old beſetting ſin---my conſcience accuſes me of committing it againſt light and conviction---it is a foul black ſpot, ſuch as is not to be found upon the children of God."

Thou art fallen: and wilt thou lie there, and not be raiſed up again? Thou art under guilt: and wilt thou nurſe it, and add ſin to ſin? Aggravate the ſinfulneſs of thy fall as much as thou

wilt, yet thou canſt not be truly humbled for it, but by returning to God, and by truſting in the plenteous redemption that is in Chriſt Jeſus. Then thy heart will be ſoftened and melted into love, for grace will have its due honour, and thou wilt ſee what the ſcripture ſays of thy caſe, in its divine truth and majeſty. Thou wilt feel thyſelf exactly what the word of God ſays of thee---a fallen ſinful creature: in thee (that is, in thy fleſh) dwelleth no good thing; ſo that there is not any ſin but thou art capable of falling into it, through the ſtrength of temptation. So long as thou art in the body, the fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh: in this conflict thou mayeſt fall, but the covenant ſecures thee from periſhing. Abraham, the father of the faithful, fell---the friend of God fell into the ſame ſin again and again. Moſes fell: ſo did David. Peter, forewarned, fell: ſo did all the apoſtles. Yet they were believers, and they recovered themſelves out of the ſnare of the devil. For whatever ſin thou art fallen into may be pardoned, as their's was. "The blood of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth from all ſin:" there is in it an infinite virtue to waſh away every ſpot and ſtain; it is a public fountain; it ſtands open for daily uſe, that believers may waſh and be clean; it is always, at every given moment, effectual; it CLEANSETH, in the preſent tenſe, now---to-day, while it is called to-day: for there is

nothing new to be ſuffered on the part of Chriſt, in order to take away ſin. He put it away by the ſacrifice of himſelf: the Father accepted it, and thus proclaims the free forgiveneſs of all the treſpaſſes for which the atonement was made: "I will be merciful to their unrighteouſneſs, and their ſins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Why doſt thou reject the comfort of this promiſe? It is ſuited to thy preſent diſtreſs, and is the remedy for it. Thou art fallen into unrighteouſneſs: God ſays, I will be merciful to it. Thou art fallen into ſins and iniquities: he ſays, I will remember them no more. Thou mayeſt remember thy fall, but let it be in order to riſe from it by faith. It ſhould teach thee thy need of the blood of the Lamb. It ſhould bring thee to ſprinkle it afreſh upon thy conſcience, and to live ſafe and happy under the protection of it. Thus apply it to thy fall, and thou wilt repent aright; thou wilt be truly humbled and made more watchful. Thou wilt live more by faith in thy covenant God, wilt glorify more the infinitely perfect ſalvation of Jeſus, and wilt be more dependent upon the grace and keeping of the eternal Spirit.

Conſider then, O my ſoul, the rich, abounding, ſuperabounding grace of thy God, in making ſuch a proviſion for raiſing thee up when fallen into ſin. He intended the promiſes in the covenant ſhould be the

means of thy recovery, as they give thee good ground ſtill to truſt in a covenant God, and in his immutable counſel and oath. O lie not then in guilt: reſt not in unbelief: give not place to the devil. The Lord has put words into thy mouth, may he help thee, in the faith of thy heart, to take them up and ſay, "Rejoice not againſt me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I ſhall ariſe; when I ſit in darkneſs, the Lord ſhall be a light unto me. I will bear the indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him, until he plead my cauſe, and execute judgment for me; he will bring me forth to the light, and I ſhall behold his righteouſneſs." If the Lord open to thee the rich treaſury of grace in this ſcripture, and enable thee to depend on the ample ſecurity here given for raiſing thee from thy fall, then conſider, in the

Third place, the expreſs promiſes made in the covenant, that the believer ſhall not periſh, but ſhall have everlaſting life.--- Theſe promiſes are not conditional, made to the believer upon certain terms, as if upon doing his part God would do his alſo: for he does not ſtand by his own will, or ſtrength, or faithfulneſs; he does not hold out to the end by his own diligence and watchfulneſs in means, or receive the crown of glory as the merited reward of any works of righteouſneſs done by him: the promiſes are all of free grace, not dependent on man's

will, but on God's; not yea and nay, but of abſolutely certain fulfilment. They were all made in the covenant to Chriſt the head, and are already made good to Chriſt, as the head, for the uſe of his members---"For ALL the the promiſes of God are in him yea, and in him *Amen*." He was given for the covenant of his people, and as ſuch, he undertook to do all their works for them and in them, and therefore all the promiſed bleſſings of the covenant are laid up in his fulneſs---"in him they are yea"---and laid up, as the head has the fulneſs of the ſenſes for the uſe of his members---"in him they are *Amen*." He communicates the promiſed bleſſings freely, not conditionally; by believing, and not for working: "Therefore," ſays the apoſtle, ſpeaking of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, "it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promiſe might be ſure to all the ſeed."

In this ſovereign manner and ſtyle runs the covenant, and every promiſe in it: I WILL BE THEIR GOD, of mine own mere motion and grace, and according to the good pleaſure of mine own will---AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE---my will ſhall make them willing in the day of my power: for I will work in them both to will and to do: yea, *I will be* a Father unto them, and *they ſhall be* my ſons and daughters, ſaith the Lord almighty. The word FATHER relates to his children, and expreſſes the unchangeable love of his heart towards them: it is a dear

covenant name, and denotes the inſeparable connection between him and his children: whenever they hear it, it ſhould always excite in them an idea of his everlaſting affection. He loves his family as a Father, and loves every one of them with the ſame almighty love. He cannot change. He cannot ceaſe to be a Father, and they cannot ceaſe to be his children. His name is a ſecurity to them, that they cannot periſh: for if one of them could, they all might. And then his covenant purpoſe to bring many ſons unto glory would be defeated---his relation to them as a Father would be broken---he would be a Father without children---he would deny them the promiſed bleſſings---he would forget to be gracious to them---his will concerning them would change, or would be over-ruled by ſome oppoſite will---and his great plan in the covenant would come to nothing. But theſe things cannot poſſibly be. He is the Father of his children, and he has engaged, by promiſe and oath, to love, to bleſs, and to keep them for ever. Out of perfect love he gave them to his Son, who undertook to be their Saviour: he came and was made man, Jehovah incarnate, to live and die for them. He was ſo delighted with them (for he has all their names written in his book) and with the work, that he was ſtraitened till it was accompliſhed. Bleſſings on him for ever! it is finiſhed. The

royal Saviour is upon the throne, almighty to ſave his dear redeemed. He would loſe his name, which is above every name; the honours of his ſalvation would fade away upon his head, and the glories of his offices would come to nothing, if one, whom Jeſus lived and died to ſave, ſhould periſh. But it is not poſſible. Whom he loves, he loves unto the end. "I give unto them," ſays he, "eternal life; and they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall any pluck them out of my hand." They are his ſeed---and it was covenanted that he ſhould ſee his ſeed. They are the travail of his ſoul---and he ſhall ſee of the travail of his ſoul, and ſhall be ſatisfied. How can he be ſatisfied, if any one of them ſhould be loſt? He prayed: "Holy Father, keep, through thine own name, thoſe whom thou haſt given me, that they may be one, as we are one." And the Father always heard him. He prayed that they might be with him where he is, to ſee his glory: and the holy Spirit covenanted to bring them to it---he undertook, as his name, *Spirit*, imports, to breathe life into them, to call, to convert them, to keep them, and to give them every thing needful for their ſpiritual life. How can they fail of coming to glory, being thus kept for it by the power of God? The holy Spirit would loſe his name, *Spirit*, or breath of life, and his office, which is to abide with, and to dwell for ever in, the elect people of

God, if any one of them ſhould die from God, and periſh. Thus there is full ſecurity given by the names and offices of the Trinity, that believers ſhall be kept from falling away. The Father cannot be without his children. The glory of Jeſus would fade away, if one of his redeemed was plucked out of his hand. The divine honours of the Spirit of life would be eclipſed, if he was to forſake his charge, and ſuffer any of the redeemed to fall into hell. But theſe things cannot be. The will of the Father, Son, and Spirit, is the ſame concerning the ſalvation of the elect, which is as ſecure as covenant bonds and oaths can make it.

Art thou then, O my ſoul, eſtabliſhed in this great truth? Doſt thou yield to the power of the evidence which the bleſſed Trinity have vouchſafed to give thee? Meditate carefully upon it for the growth of thy faith. Search the ſcriptures, and obſerve how clearly God declares his fixed purpoſe to keep his people, and to hold them up unto the end. The great preacher of the goſpel in the Old Teſtament church, ſpeaks thus of the unchangeable will of a covenant God: "The mountains ſhall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindneſs ſhall not depart from thee, neither ſhall the covenant of my peace be removed, ſaith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." A great preacher in the New Teſtament church has

confirmed the ſame precious truth. He is treating of the golden chain of ſalvation, and ſhewing how inſeparable every link of it is, and in this proſpect he triumphs: "Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that juſtifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that died, yea, rather that is riſen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who alſo maketh interceſſion for us. Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt? Shall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or ſword? Nay, in all theſe things we are more than conquerors through him that loveth us." By the mouth of theſe two infallible witneſſes the truth is eſtabliſhed---they depoſe that the covenant is immutable, and that nothing can ſeparate believers from the love wherewith God loves them in his Son. O moſt comfortable doctrine! How encouraging is it in any undertaking to ſet about it with certain hope of ſucceſs. How animating in our Chriſtian walk, how reviving in the dark and difficult path of it, to have God's promiſe that he will keep us, and bring us to a happy end! How pleaſing is it to go on by faith in our warfare, caſting all our care upon him who careth for us! How delightful is it to truſt his promiſe, and daily to find it made good: "Ye are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto eternal ſalvation." Here, O my ſoul, thou art to ſeek for ſtrong conſolation

amidſt the trials and difficulties of thy walk. Thou art afraid of falling---God has engaged to hold thee up. Thou haſt been tempted to think thou ſhouldſt fall quite away, and come to nothing---but God ſays, thou art PRESERVED in Chriſt Jeſus---His covenant and oath are made to confirm the faith of thy perſevering. Thou ſtandeſt by faith, and thy faith ſhould lead thee to reſt ſafely on what God ſays about thy ſtanding: and for thy faith itſelf, its continuing, its increaſing, thou haſt his infallible faithfulneſs to depend upon. Thou art weak---but he keeps thee by his power. Thine enemies are ſtrong---but none of them ſhall pluck thee out of his hand. Thou art willing to join them, and to depart from the living God---but he has promiſed to put his fear into thy heart, and thou ſhalt not depart from him. He meets with thy doubts, and anſwers all thine objections in a word---For he hath ſaid, I WILL NEVER LEAVE THEE, NOR FORSAKE THEE.

Be of good courage then, O my ſoul, and go forward, ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, and he will bring thee ſafe to the end of thy journey. He has promiſed it. Put thyſelf into his hands, and give him the glory of keeping thee. He will hold up thy goings in his paths, that thy footſteps ſlip not. The Lord ſhall preſerve thee from all evil. The Lord ſhall preſerve thy going out and thy coming in,

from this time forth, and even for evermore. How then canſt thou miſcarry, ſafe under his guidance and keeping? Commit thy ways unto the Lord. Do it ſimply. Look up by faith to his promiſe, and then lean on his arm. Thus going on thou mayeſt rejoice at every ſtep in the Lord thy God. He has left thee a ſweet hymn upon the ſubject, with which the weary travellers to Sion have often refreſhed their ſpirits. Take it up, and ſing it after them. Study it. Mix faith with it: and with perfect reliance on what God, who cannot lie, has promiſed in it to do for thee, ſing and make melody with it in thy heart unto the Lord---

"In that day ſing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine: I the Lord do keep it: I will water it every moment: leſt any hurt it, I will keep it night and day: fury is not in me: who would ſet the briers and thorns againſt me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together. Or will he take hold of my ſtrength, that he may make peace with me, then he ſhall make peace with me. He ſhall cauſe them that come of Jacob to take root: Iſrael ſhall bloſſom and bud, and ſhall fill the face of the world with fruit."

O my good God and faithful keeper, I do believe theſe precious promiſes; help mine unbelief. Forgive my diſtruſting thy faithfulneſs, and enable me ſtedfaſtly to rely upon it for the future. What return can I

make unto thee for grafting me into the true vine? O Lord, this love ſurpaſſeth knowledge. I was fit for nothing but the fire, and thou haſt brought me into the vineyard of red wine, and haſt enabled me to truſt in that blood of the Lamb which cheereth God and man. On this my ſoul lives, and is refreſhed: and being through grace *in* him, and living *upon* him, I bleſs thee, holy Father, for thy faithful promiſe to keep me unto the end. I am ſtill an eaſy prey to all thoſe who ſeek the hurt of my ſoul; but thou haſt given me thy word, that leſt any hurt me, thou wilt keep me night and day. I confeſs, gracious God, that I have diſhonoured thee by doubting of thy love, and by queſtioning its unchangeableneſs, but now I believe that fury is not in thee to any one branch in the true vine. There is love, and nothing but love in all thy dealings with Chriſt, and with his. Forgive my guilty fears and ſuſpicions of thy forſaking me, ariſing from my weakneſs, and from the ſtrength of mine enemies: I now ſee that thou canſt as eaſily conſume them as fire can briers and thorns. Lord, increaſe my faith in thy promiſed ſtrength, that I may lay hold of it for peace, and may keep faſt hold of it for maintaining peace with thee always and by all means. O grant me this, my good God, that my faith may work more by love. Let me take deeper root in Jeſus, and grow up more into him, bloſſoming

and budding and flouriſhing in his vineyard. I depend upon thee to keep me a branch in him, and to make me a fruitful branch, bringing forth plentifully the fruits of righteouſneſs, which are by Chriſt Jeſus to the glory and praiſe of God. I believe the work is thine---thou haſt begun it---and thou wilt carry it on until the day of the Lord Jeſus. Thou art faithful to thy word and work. In dependence upon thy faithfulneſs I hope to perſevere. Let it be done unto me according to thy promiſes, wherein thou haſt cauſed me to put my truſt. Hear, Lord, and anſwer, for thy mercies' ſake in Jeſus, to whom with thee and the eternal Spirit, three perſons in one Godhead, be equal glory and praiſe, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

CHAP. XV.

The believer finiſhes his courſe, and enters into reſt.

THE believer is now happily arrived at the verge of life. Goodneſs and mercy have followed him all his days, and will not loſe their glory by forſaking him at the cloſe of them. It is appointed unto all men once to die, and his fixed time is at hand. The body is returning to duſt, and the ſpirit muſt appear before the throne of

God. In this trying hour he truſts to the principles which had carried him through life, and he finds them a perfect preſervative from the fear and from the power of death. The ſame faith in a reconciled God and loving Father keeps peace in his conſcience, and love in his heart. He depends upon the atonement of Immanuel, and is ſafe: he wraps himſelf up in the robe of Immanuel's righteouſneſs, and is happy. He knows he ſhall be found in Jeſus, when he ſtands before God; and therefore he looks upon death as his friend, and meets it with a hope full of glory and immortality.

This is the privilege of believers in Jeſus. They die in peace. Their principles are mighty, through God, to ſupport and comfort them in the hour of death. Reader, are theſe principles thine? Examine carefully. Come to a point in this matter: for it is of infinite and eternal moment. What is thy ſtate? Art thou prepared to die? Perhaps thou art openly prophane. And what wilt thou do upon thy death-bed, when the divine law accuſes thee, juſtice condemns thee, and the terrors of hell take hold of thee? The ſtings of guilt, at ſuch a time, will be worſe in the conſcience than all the tortures that thy ſick body can poſſibly feel. But if thy conſcience be aſleep---O what a dreadful death! if thou go out of the world with thine eyes ſhut, and open them not till thou find the flames of hell about thee!

Perhaps thou art not afraid, becauſe thou haſt a decent outſide: O take care of truſting in thyſelf, leſt thou ſhouldſt have thy portion with the openly prophane. If thou make what thou art, or haſt, any ground of thy hope before God; if thou depend on thy duties, or righteouſneſs, or join them with the work of Chriſt, and meet death in this confidence; how dreadful will be thy miſtake! how inevitable thy ruin! Such falſe hopes are thus deſcribed: "Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, and compaſs yourſelves about with ſparks, walk in the light of your fire, and in the ſparks that ye have kindled"---but mind the end---thus ſaith the Lord: "This ſhall ye have of mine hand, ye ſhall lie down in ſorrow." And together with them will the open enemy of God and his Chriſt lie down. A denier of revelation is brought to the bed of languiſhing---a ſlow lingering diſtemper is carrying him off---the phyſician has given him over---his diſeaſe is mortal, and he is convinced of it. But, alas! he has no preparation for death and judgment. He has ſome Chriſtian friends, and they talk freely to him about his eternal ſtate, but he will hear nothing of his guilt, or of his want of a Saviour. They get a miniſter of Chriſt to viſit him, and he ſpeaks to him of ſin, which is the tranſgreſſion of the holy law, and of the juſtice of God, which is engaged to give tranſgreſſors their due, and of the impoſſibility of his

finding mercy at the judgment-ſeat, until every demand be ſatisfied, which law and juſtice have upon him: he tries to perſuade the dying man of the Godhead of Jeſus, and of the divine work of Jeſus: but in vain. He ſets at nought the miniſter's advice, and with a hardened and impenitent heart replies---Be it as it will with me in eternity, I'll have nothing to do with your Chriſt. So he died. We need not follow him to the judgment ſeat, to know what became of his ſoul. The infallible record has declared what will be the portion of the unbelieving. Their miſery is as certain as the truth of God. O reader, examine thyſelf: for he that believeth not is condemned already: becauſe he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Perhaps thou art in name a Chriſtian, but what thinkeſt thou of Chriſt? The grand hereſy of this day is about his perſon, and if thou art fallen into it, there is no hope in thy death. Is he Jehovah? O leave not this matter undetermined. The truth of his word and the glory of his work depend entirely upon this one point; ſo does thy peace and comfort: for if thou believe him to be any thing but the ſelf-exiſtent God, thou ſhalt die in thy ſins. His ſufferings cannot avail for thy pardon, nor his obedience for thy righteouſneſs, unleſs he be Jehovah. Without faith in him, as the ſelf-exiſtent Saviour, death will find

thee under guilt, and judgment will leave thee among the enemies of God and his Chriſt.

Whatever evil there is in death to terrify, whatever pain to hurt, the bleſſed Jeſus, by the grace of God, taſted it for all his. The grace of the Father gave him to be the ſurety for his people unto death. He died for them, and as truly taſted death as ever the niceſt palate taſted meat or drink. But it was like a taſte---of ſhort duration---it was not poſſible that he ſhould be holden long under the bands of death. He roſe again on the third day: and becauſe he lives, believers in him ſhall live alſo. They are partakers of his victory over death, and ſhare in all its bleſſings. The ſentence of the broken law is repealed. They do not die to bear the puniſhment of ſin. Chriſt ſuſtained that. The pains and agonies of death fell upon him: "The ſorrows of death," ſays he, "compaſſed me, and the pains of hell got hold upon me." He was a juſt man, who had no reaſon to fear death; but being found in the place of his people, with their ſins upon him, he was to bear every thing that was dreadful in death. Hence his agonies at the approach of it: "My heart," ſays he, "is ſore pained within me, and the terrors of death are fallen upon me: fearfulneſs and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me." He endured thoſe inconceivable horrors to deliver them, who,

through fear of death, had been all their life-time ſubject to bondage. But the bondage is at an end, when they believe in his victory. Their fears are diſpelled, when they ſee the glory of the battle which he fought and won---How by dying he took away ſin, ſatisfied juſtice, removed the curſe, conquered death, broke its ſceptre, took out its ſting, and left nothing in it but what is friendly to them. In theſe believing views they can meet death with confidence: for they cannot taſte that in death which Chriſt taſted. He felt it that they might not feel it: he died in agonies, that they might die in peace. O my moſt loving and precious Jeſus, I believe this, let not any unbelief in me diſhonour thy complete conqueſt over all that is fearful or painful in dying. My times are in thy hand: when thou art pleaſed to bring them to an end, let me find death ſwallowed up in victory: O that I may then triumph with thy redeemed---What can ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt---ſhall the ſting of death, or the fear of death, or of Satan, or of hell? No; thanks be to God---theſe were all conquered when Jeſus died; ſubdued for ever when he roſe again. And he has left us many precious promiſes that we, truſting in him, ſhall ſhare in his victory, and find the bleſſings of it in the hour of death.

Attend then, O my ſoul, to what he has engaged to beſtow upon his dying diſciples,

as the fruit of his death; and give him credit, not doubting but he will make it good. Live now in the comfort of his promiſes, and fear not. The almighty Jeſus will be with thee, and thou ſhalt conquer with him in the hour of death. Obſerve his word, which cannot be broken: "I will ranſom them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plague; O grave, I will be thy deſtruction; repentance ſhall be hid from mine eyes." The ranſom which he here engages to pay for his, he paid, as their ſurety, and he daily applies it to them, as their Saviour. Upon quoting this promiſe, and finding, by faith, the happy fulfilment of it, mark how the apoſtle rejoices with the Corinthians, in the near view of death: "O death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy victory? The ſting of death is ſin, and the ſtrength of ſin is the law: but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord." O thou moſt glorious conqueror, almighty Jeſus, eternal thanks be to thee, that the law cannot accuſe, ſin cannot condemn, death cannot ſting thy redeemed. Thou haſt promiſed to make them happy in death, and faithful is thy word. The beloved John is one of thy witneſſes: "I heard a voice from heaven ſaying unto me, Write, bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord:" write it for the uſe of my diſciples, that it may be the ground

of their faith when they come to die: I promiſe to make them bleſſed in their death: being IN me, members under me their head, and living IN the Lord, they ſhall die IN the Lord: they ſhall have union with me, and communion too, when they are dying: the hour of death, the time of their diſſolution ſhall be a ſeaſon of great bleſſedneſs: they ſhall have my preſence in their laſt moments: I will walk with them through the valley of the ſhadow of death, and they ſhall fear no evil; my rod and my ſtaff ſhall then comfort them. O my God, make thy word good. Sweet Jeſus, write this promiſe upon my heart. O help me to mix faith with it, that when mine appointed time is come, I may experience the bleſſedneſs of dying in the Lord. I wait for the time, it is not far off. O keep me, Jeſus, till that hour: keep me, Jeſus, in that hour. Save me through life and death, and bleſs me with thine eternal ſalvation. Hear, and anſwer, for thy mercies' ſake. *Amen.*

Meditate, O my ſoul, upon theſe bleſſings. Conſider how great, how many they are. Conſider alſo thine unworthineſs.---Thou art leſs than the leaſt of them: and yet God has ſet his love upon thee, and has given thee the greateſt of them. He has called thee to the knowledge of his love in Jeſus, and has ſhed it abroad in thy heart. He has ſet thee in the way that leads to the eternal enjoyment of his love, has promiſed

to keep thee all the way, and to bleſs thee at the end of it. He will make thee bleſſed in death, and bleſſed for evermore. Hitherto thou haſt found him faithful. Not one good thing has failed, which thou didſt aſk in faith, and wait for at his hands. Review all his dealings with thee, and ſee what infinite mercy there was in them. He made thy walk proſperous, thy warfare ſucceſsful, thy croſſes ſanctified. Thou haſt not taken a falſe ſtep, but when thou waſt not living by the faith of the Son of God. O truſt him then, and be not afraid. His love has brought thee thus far: he has led thee in the right way to the verge of life, and he declares he will not leave thee nor forſake thee in the hour of death. Fear not to look down; fear not to go down with Jeſus into the grave. He has promiſed, "I will be with thee;" and wherever he is, there is heaven. He is with his dying friends, and they are bleſſed indeed. They die in faith; they live by faith in death; and as ſoon as faith ceaſes, they live with their God for ever. The body falls aſleep, and reſts ſafely till the morning of the reſurrection. The ſoul in a moment enters into the joy of its Lord---a joy like his---pure and holy---a fulneſs of joy---every ſenſe has its proper object---enjoys it---and is ſatisfied for ever. O what will the heart feel in this bleſſedneſs! What acknowledgments will it make to God and the Lamb. To praiſe him for the won-

ders of his grace, in bringing to that glory, will be the happy employment of eternity. To ſee him as he is, in his divine majeſty, is heaven. For how great communications of his love the being ever with him, and ever like him, will make the ſoul capable of, we cannot perfectly conceive. Theſe things are at preſent too high and heavenly, even for our thoughts. By faith we ſometimes have a little glimpſe of the glory to be revealed, and it eclipſes all the grandeur of the world. There are happy moments, when we are permitted to behold the king in his beauty, when he diſcovers his matchleſs lovelineſs, and gives us a taſte of the heavenly feaſt: at ſuch bleſſed ſeaſons the ſoul is bowed down and humbled to the duſt, adoring the infinite mercy and goodneſs of God. If there be ſo much of heaven in theſe manifeſtations of divine love, what muſt the full enjoyment be? We may ſuppoſe a happy ſoul, entered into reſt, thus meditating upon the grace which brought it to that glory:

Bleſſing and thanks without ceaſing be unto Father, Son, and Spirit, through whoſe ſovereign grace I was choſen to this bleſſedneſs, and am now brought to the perfect and everlaſting enjoyment of it. This communion with the Godhead, through Jeſus, is as far beyond my former thoughts of it, as the heaven is above the earth.--- How great is his goodneſs, and how great is his beauty, that the Moſt High and Holy

One would thus communicate his love unto ſinful creatures. Glory be to thee, holy Father, for predeſtinating me to the adoption of children, and for the free gift of the heavenly inheritance. Glory be to thee, incarnate Jehovah, for thy covenant undertakings for me, for thy life, death, and complete ſalvation. I worſhip thee, I glorify thee, O God the Holy Ghoſt, for quickening me, for teaching me, and enabling me, through believing in Jeſus, to experience the love of the Father, and for bringing me to enjoy his endleſs bleſſings. Surely the goodneſs and mercy of the Holy Trinity have followed me all the days of my life; were with me when I walked through the valley of the ſhadow of death; and are now my moſt bleſſed portion in the houſe of the Lord. I am made a pillar in the temple of my God, and am to go no more out. O what exceeding riches of grace are theſe! What has God done for me! Angels, and brethren, help me to praiſe. My debt is immenſe. No ſaved ſinner can owe him more: it is growing every moment. My praiſes pay none of it. With my thankful heart, and it is all thankfulneſs, I only acknowledge his infinite goodneſs, and own myſelf his eternal debtor. Bleſſing and honour and glory and power be unto him that ſitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever.

Reader, art thou in the way which leads

to this glory? If not, may the Lord be merciful unto thee, and bring thee unto it.

If thou art ſeeking to be ſet right in it, remember, Jeſus is THE WAY. May his good Spirit enable thee to believe in his word, and to truſt in it, till thou attain to the ſalvation of thy ſoul.

If thou art in the way, and haſt communion with the Father, through faith in the atonement and righteouſneſs of his Son, art thou maintaining it in thy daily walk, and improving it in every duty? and art thou going on thy way rejoicing in God? If thou art ſorrowing for outward croſſes, or burdened with inward conflicts, canſt thou nevertheleſs find joy and peace in believing? Doſt thou march on, victorious in thy warfare, keeping up communion with God againſt all oppoſition of thy ſpiritual enemies? and is thy faith eſtabliſhed upon the faithfulneſs of God, that he will carry on his own work in thee unto the day of the Lord Jeſus? In this faith art thou now living? and in this faith doſt thou hope to die? Has God indeed done theſe wonders for thee? O bleſs him then with me, and let us magnify his name together. Be thou exalted, Lord, in us, and by us. Every day we would grow up into nearer and holier communion with thee. We deſire to be more like thee, and to ſhew forth more of thy lovely image before men. O help us to praiſe thee better with our lips and lives.

By the communion of the Holy Ghoſt we would communicate more by faith with the Son in his ſalvation, and with the Father in his love. O holy, bleſſed, and glorious Trinity, in this divine fellowſhip we hope to find our heaven upon earth: let it be growing and increaſing, helped forward by all means, and, if it pleaſe thee, by this volume. Make it, Lord, the inſtrument under thee of leading thy people into the right way, and of eſtabliſhing them in it. Accompany the reading of it with the teaching of thy Spirit, and to the advancement of thy glory. I preſent the book unto thee, ever glorious Jeſus, and lay it at thy feet. Thou knoweſt my heart: accept it graciouſly, as a public acknowledgement for ineſtimable mercies. In thy great compaſſion overlook the faults in it: what is agreeable to the ſcripture is thine own. Make uſe of it to thy praiſe. I devote myſelf, my body and ſoul, my tongue and pen, all I have and am, to thy ſervice. I would not look upon myſelf as any longer mine own, but being bought with a price, I would glorify thee in the uſe of all thy gifts and graces. With thee I deſire to walk through life. In thine arms I hope to die. Through thee I expect ſoon to enjoy perfect communion with the Father and the Spirit: therefore into thy hands I commend myſelf. Keep me in the right way. Guide me to the end of it, that I may finiſh my courſe with joy, and join

thy redeemed in giving to thee, with the Father and the Spirit, the three in one Jehovah, equal and everlasting praise. Hear, Lord, and answer. *Amen.*

THE END.

BRITISH
21 JY 82
MUSEUM

LIST OF BOOKS

Printed for W. BAYNES, 54, *Pater-noster-row.*

N. B. In ordering any of the Articles in this List, be particular in saying BAYNES' Editions.

---

1. GRANGER's (Rev. James) *Biographical Hiſtory of England*, neatly printed on fine paper, with a capital Portrait of the Author, *the Fourth Edition*, reviſed and corrected, in 4 vols. 8vo, on Demy Paper, *l*1 8s. A few copies may be had on a fine Royal Paper, hot-preſſed *l*2 2s boards.

There is preparing a Continuation to the above, to End Geo. II. By MARK NOBLE, F. A. S. of L. E.

2 THE ANIMATED AND POPULAR SERMONS OF PRESIDENT DAVIES, A. M. of America, with his Life, &c. in 3 vols. 8vo.

3 The *Economy of the Covenants between God and Man*, comprehending a *Complete Body of Divinity*. By the Learned HERMAN WITSIUS, D. D. faithfully tranſlated from the Latin, neatly printed on fine paper, with an *Elegant Portrait of the Author*, in 2 large vols. 8vo, 14s boards.

4 *Baxter's (Rev. Richard) Chriſtian Directory*, or ſure guide to Preſent and Eternal Happineſs, abridged from the original by ADAM CLARKE, Editor of Fleury's Hiſtory of the Iſraelites, &c. neatly printed in 2 large vols. 8vo, 16s boards.

5 *Horæ Solitariæ*, or Eſſays upon ſome remarkable Names and Titles of the *Holy Spirit* occurring in the Old and New Teſtament, and Declarative of his *Eſſential Divinity and Gracious Offices* in the Salvation of men. By the author of the *Chriſtian Remembrancer, &c. Third Edition*, neatly printed in 2 large vols. 8vo, 16s boards.

6 *Henry's (Rev. Matthew) Method for Prayer*, to which is added his Directions for daily Communion with God, neat book, 12mo, 2s 6d boards

*** See the Recommendation of the above in Evangelical Magazine for January laſt.

7 *Mavor's (Dr.) New Speaker*, or Engliſh Class Book, 2d edition, reviſed, large 12mo, 4s bound.

8 *Macgowan's (Rev. John)* Infernal Conference, or *Dialogues of Devils*, in which the many vices which abound in the Civil and Religious world Doctrinal and Practical, are traced to their proper Sources, &c. a new edition, with a frontiſpiece, in 2 neat vols. 24mo. 4s. boards.

9 *Macgowan's Death, a Viſion*, or the Solemn Departure of Saints and Sinners, Repreſented under the Similitude of a Dream, the eighth edition, with a frontiſpiece, 1s ſewed, or 1s 6d bound.

10 *Macgowan's Shaver*, a Sermon, on the Expulſion of the 6 young Men from the Univerſity of Oxford, for Praying, Reading, and Expounding the Scriptures, &c. with a frontiſpiece, 6d ſtitched.

11 *Macgowan's Arian and Socinians Monitor*, being a Viſion, which a Young Socinian Teacher lately had, a new edition, with a frontiſpiece, 6d ſtitched.

12 *Macgown's Looking Glaſs, for the Profeſſors of Religion*; conſiſting of 7 Tracts on Practical Subjects, a new edition, 24mo. 2s boards.

13 *Macgowan's Life of Joſeph* the Son of Iſrael, in eight Books, chiefly deſigned to allure Young Minds to a Love of the Sacred Scriptures, *third edition*, corrected, with a frontiſpiece, 2s boards, or on finer paper, larger ſize, 3s. boards.

14 *The above Works of Rev. John Macgowan*, all uniformly done up, in 5 vols. boards, coloured backs, &c. 10s. or bound in ſheep 12s 6d, or calf, elegantly gilt, &c. 16s.

15 *Aſſembly's Shorter Catechiſm*, with Scripture Proofs, neat ſmall edition, bound in leather, 6d.

16 *Boſton's (Rev. Thomas) View of the Covenant of Grace*, from the Sacred Records, large print, 8vo. 5s bound.

17 *Boſton's Human Nature in its Fourfold State*, large print, 8vo. 7s bound.

18 *Beveridge's (Bp.) Private Thoughts upon Religion*, in 2 parts 18*th edition*, with the Life and Portrait of the Author, fine paper, 12mo, 3s 6d boards.

N. B. This Excellent Work comprizes a little Body of Divinity, Doctrinal, Practical, and Experimental, and is uſeful for all families.

19 *Baxter's (Rev. Richard) Saints Everlaſting Reſt*, abridged by B. Fawcett, A. M. *eighth edition*, neatly printed on fine paper with portrait, 12mo 3s 6d boards.

20 *Baxter's Call to the Unconverted*, a new and complete edition, uniform to the above, 12mo, 1s 6d boards, or 2s bound—in calf 2s 8d.

21 *Brooke's (Rev. Thomas) Apples of Gold* for Young Men and Women, a new and neat edition, fine paper, 18mo, 2s bound.

This is an Inſtructive and Entertaining Volume, abounding with many Juſt and Striking Remarks, calculated to impreſs the heart and lead the mind to the contemplation of Divine Things, &c. *Vide Evang. Mag. March*, 1803.

22 *Brooke's Mute Chriſtian* under the *Smarting Rod*, with Sovereign Antidotes for every Caſe, a new edition reviſed, with a Recommendatory preface by Rev. *Mr. Ball*, Jewry-Street, neatly printed in 18mo, 1s 6d boards, or 2s bound.

23 *Brook's Precious Remedies* againſt Satan's Devices, a new edition, corrected, 18mo, 2s bound.

24 *Brown's* (Rev. John) *Scripture Metaphors*, 12mo, 3s boards, or bound 3s 6d and 4s.

25 *Bunyan's* Doctrine of the *Law and Grace* unfolded, 12mo, 2s bound.

26 *Bunyan's* Grace abounding, with his Life and Death, a neat edition, 18mo, 1s boards, or 1s 3d bound.

27 *Bunyan's Phariſee and Publican*, being a Diſcourſe on Prayer, &c. a neat edition, 18mo, 1s 6d bound.

28 *Booth's Reign of Grace*, the *ſeventh edition*, large print, fine paper, 12mo, 3s boards, or bound 3s 6d and 4s.

29 *Clarke's* (Dr. Sam.) *Collection of the Promiſes of Scripture*, fine paper, 12mo, 3s boards, or with the Life of Chriſt, 3s 6d.

30 *Doddridge's* (Dr. Philip) *Riſe and Progreſs of Religion* in the Soul, a new fine edition, with portrait, 3s bound, and 3s 6d and 4s.

31 *Doddridge's* 10 *Sermons on the Power and Grace* of Chriſt, and on the Evidences of his Glorious Goſpel, neat edition, 18mo, common paper, 2s—fine 2s 6d bound.

32 *Doddridge's* 7 *Sermons to Young People*, neat pocket edition, with portrait, 1s 3d boards, or 1s 6d and 2s 6d bound.

33 *Doddridge's Evidences of Chriſtianity* briefly ſtated, and the New Teſtament proved to be Genuine, in 3 Sermons, neat pocket edition, with the Author's portrait, 1s 3d boards, or 1s 6d bound.

34 *The Works of Dr. Doddridge*, in 5 vols common, *l*1 15s
Ditto royal fine paper, vols 1 to 5 at 8s 6d each.
N. B. To be completed in 10 Volumes.

35 *Erskine's* (Rev. Ralph) *Goſpel Sonnets*, beſt London edition, with plates, and Life of the Author, 4s common paper, and 5s fine, bound.

36 *Evan's (Dr. John) Sermons on the Chriſtian Temper*, new edition, with his Life, by *Dr. Erskine*, 2 vols. 12mo, 8s. boards.

37 *Flavel's (Rev. John) Treatiſe on the Soul of Man*, beſt fine edition, with Portrait, 8vo, 5s. boards

38 *Flavel's Myſtery of Providence*, as it paſſes through the the courſe of Man's Life, 12mo, with frontiſpiece, 2s bound.

39 *Flavel's Navigation Spiritualized*, neat edition, with the head of the Author, 2s boards, or 2s 6d bound.

40 *Flavel's Token for Mourners*, 12mo, 1s 6d bound.

41 *Flavel's Keeping the Heart and Searching the Heart*, 2 Treatiſes, neat edition, with portrait, 2s 6d boards, or 3s and 3s 6d bound.

There are few writings of a more uſeful tendency than thoſe of Mr. FLAVEL'S; his ſprightly remarks, his warm addreſſes to the heart, his judicious quotations from ancient writers, and his juſt and practical inferences, render his works truly valuable and inſtructive. To thoſe who have a ſpiritual taſte, who deſire to be acquainted with their own hearts, who are anxious to know their real ſtate, and are looking for evidences of grace, theſe Treatiſes will be exceedingly acceptable.——*Vide Evang. Mag. Sept. laſt.*

42 *Female Pilgrim*, or the Travels of Hephzibah, under the Similitude of a Dream, by *John Mitchel, 2d edition*, with plates, 8vo, 7s bound.

43 *Farmer's (Hugh) General Prevalence of the Worſhip of Human Spirits*, in the ancient Heathen Nations, aſſerted and proved, thick 8vo, 7s boards.

44 *Farmer on Miracles*, 8vo, 6s boards.

45 *Fleming's (Rev. Robert) Divine Right of the Revolution*, ſcripturally and rationally evinced and applied, 8vo, 1s.

46 *Fleming's Diſcourſe concerning Earthquakes*, 8vo, 1s 6d ſewed.

47 Ditto. The above 2 pieces of Mr. Fleming's, and his *Apocalyptical Key*, an extraordinary Diſcourſe on the Riſe and Fall of Popery, &c. &c. with his portrait, &c. all done up in 1 vol. boards, labelled on the back, 4s 6d.

48 *Fiſher's Young Man's Beſt Companion*, 12mo, 2s 6d bound.

49 *Fenning's New and Eaſy Guide to Algebra* corrected and enlarged by W. Davis, 12mo, 4s bound.

50 *Fleury's Short Hiſtory of the Ancient Iſraelites* with an account of their Manners, Cuſtoms, Laws, Polity, Religion, &c. a work of the greateſt Utility to all thoſe who read the Bible, &c. tranſlated from the French, and corrected and enlarged by *Adam Clarke*, 8vo, 4s boards.

N. B. *This is particularly recommended* to be put into the *hands of every young perſon* by BISHOP HORNE.—*Vide his Sermons, vol.* 2.

51 *Dr Gill's* 2 *Sermons*, the Sure Performance of Prophecy, and the Glorious State of the Saints in Heaven, 8vo, 1s ſtitched.

52 *Gibbon's (Dr.) Hidden Life of a Chriſtian*, exemplified in the Diary, Meditations, and Letters of a Young Miniſter, 3d edition, 2s bound.

53 *Guy's Miſcellaneous Selections* or the Rudiments of Uſeful Knowlege, from the firſt authorities, deſigned for Senior Scholars in Schools, and young perſons in General, *2d edition*, a thick 12mo, 5s bound, or 6s elegant for preſents.

54 *Hebrew Grammar*, compiled from ſome of the moſt conſiderable Grammars, and particularly adapted to Bythner's Lyra Prophetica, new edition, corrected and enlarged by Mr. Yeates, of All Souls College, Oxford, with an elegant engraving of the Hebrew Alphabet, &c. 8vo, 2s 6d ſewed.

55 *Henry's Bible*, a new and beautiful edition, to be completed in 216 numbers, large print, on fine wove paper, royal 4to, 6d each, 4 numbers publiſhed monthly; there is 56 already publiſhed.

N. B. Vol. I. is juſt completed, and may be had in boards, price 21s, but the names of the purchaſers muſt be left with the publiſher to enſure their taking the remainder. N. B. Their is preparing an elegant ſet of plates for the work, which may be had optionally at 1s per number.

56 *Hannam's Analytical Compendium*, or out-lines of ſermons extracted from various authors, 2 vols. 12mo, 7s boards.

N. B. Vol. II. ſold ſeparate.

See the very favourable account of this work in *Evang. Mag. Sept. laſt.*

57 *Huſſey's (Rev. Joſeph) God's operations* of Grace, but no Offers of Grace to Sinners, &c. 3d edition, revized and corrected by Rev. Mr. Huntington, 8vo, 5s boards.

58 *Hill's Sermons* for Families, 8vo 6s.

59 Ditto, on a fine royal paper, 8s boards.

60 *Halyburton (Rev. Thomas) on Deiſm*, 8vo, 5s boards.

61 *Houſeman's (Mrs. of Kidderminſter) Diary*, with her Life, by Pearſall, 8vo, 1s 6d.

62 *Hervey's (Rev. James) Theron and Aſpaſio*, or a ſeries of Dialogues and Letters, on the moſt Important and Intereſting Subjects, 2 vols. 12mo, 6s boards, or 7s bound.

63 Ditto, large print, 3 vols. in 2, 8vo, 12s bound.

64 *Hervey's Meditations*, 2 vols. in 1, 12mo, 3s bound,

65 *Hervey's Works*, 6 vols, 12mo, 18s boards.

66 *Heywood (Rev. Oliver,) on Cloſet Prayer*, 12mo, 2s bound.

67 *Henry on the Lord's Supper*, 12mo, 2s 6d bound.

68 *Henry's Life*, by Tongue, 12mo, 3s bound.

69 *Keach's Travels of Ungodlineſs*, new edition, with a frontiſpiece, 18mo, 1s bound.

70 *Keach's Travels of True Godlineſs*, new edition, with a frontiſpiece, 18mo, 1s bound.

71 Ditto: the above 2 pieces neatly bound together in red, 2s.

72 *Law's (Rev. William) Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*, 14th edition, with the Life of the Author, 3 of his Letters, &c. 8vo, 6s boards.

Dr. Johnſon ſays, "*Law's Serious Call*" is the fineſt piece of hortatory theology in any language.—*Vide his Life by Boſwell*, 8vo. *vol.* 2.

73 *Luther's (Dr. Martin) Familiar Diſcourſes* at his Table, commonly called his Table Talk, *new edition*, with his Life, and a fine portrait, folio, 15s boards.

74 *Life of Francis Spira*, with his Dreadful Sufferings and awful Death, 12mo, 1s 6d ſewed.

75 *Locke's (John, Eſq.) Eſſay on the Human Underſtanding*, neat edition, 3 vols. 12mo, 9s boards.

76 *Locke's Conduct of the Underſtanding*, with Portrait of the Author, 12mo, 2s 6d boards.

77 *Locke's Thoughts Concerning Education*, neat edition, on fine paper, 12mo, 3s boards.

78 *Maclaurin's Treatiſe of Fluxions*, 2d *edition*, handſomely

printed on fine paper, with 41 new 4to copper plates, and an elegant Portrait of the Author, 2 vols. 8vo, *l*1 8s boards.

79 *Maclaurin's Eſſay on the Prophecies relating to the Meſſiah*, with an Eſſay on Happineſs, and 3 Sermons, 8vo, 6s boards.

80 *Maclaurin's Sermons and Eſſays*, with his Life and Character, by Dr. Gillies, *3d edition*, 12mo, 3s 6d boards.

Maclaurin's Sermons and Eſſays is a work of uncommon worth, truth, and experience, traced to their genuine principles, a mind equally devout and penetrating, and language highly expreſſive and energetic.—*Vide Dr. Williams's Chriſtian Preacher.*

81 *Sermons, by J. B. Maſſillon*, Biſhop of Clermont, tranſlated by W. Dickſon, 3d edition, 3 vols. 12mo, 12s boards.

82 *Moſheim's Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory*, with notes, &c. by Dr. Maclain, 6 vols. 8vo, *l*1 10s boards.

83 *Marſhall's (Rev. W.) Goſpel Myſtery of Sanctification*, ſtrongly recommended by the Rev. Mr. Hervey, 12th edition, large print, on fine paper, 12mo, 3s boards, or 3s 6d and 4s. bound.

84 *Maſon's (Mrs.) Cookery Book*, (beſt extant) 8vo, 6s bound.

85 *Maſon's (Rev. John A. M.) Select Remains*, 12mo, 1s bound.

86 *Macewen on the Types*, new edition, 12mo, 2s 6d boards.

87 *Macewen's Select Eſſays*, Doctrinal and Practical, with his Life, 12mo, 3s bound.

88 *Myles' Chronological Hiſtory of the Methodiſts*, 3d edition, 12mo, 5s boards.

89 *Newton's (Bp.) Diſſertations on the Prophecies*, which have been remarkably fulfilled, &c. new edition, on fine paper, with an elegant Portrait of the Author, 2 vols. 8vo, 12s boards.

90 *Oriental Collections*, vol. III. for 1799, the laſt publiſhed, with plates, 4to, 15s, publiſhed at 21s.

91 *Prophetical Extracts*, containing ſeveral ſcarce Prophetic Pieces, relating to the French Revolution, the Judgment of God on Germany, &c. with hieroglyphic prints, &c. 8vo, 5s boards.

92 *Robinſon Cruſoe's* Life and Adventures, with a fine frontiſpiece, neatly printed, 12mo, 3s bound.

93 *Ryland's (Rev. John) Preceptor*, or General Repoſitory of Uſeful Information for young Perſons in General, large 12mo, 3s bound.

94 *Ruſſel's (Rev. Robert)* 7 *Sermons*, an excellent little family book, 1s bound.

95 *Sonnini's Travels in Upper and Lower Egypt*, illuſtrated with 28 fine Engravings, and a Map of the Country, by the firſt artiſts, printed on fine wove paper, in 1 large volume, 4to, price *l*1 11s 6d boards, lately publiſhed at *l*2 12s 6d.

For an high character of the above—*ſee the different Reviews.*

96 *Sheraton's Cabinet Maker and Upholſterer's Drawing Book*, containing a great variety of Original Deſigns in Beds, Chairs, and every article of houſehold furniture, in the neweſt and moſt approved ſtile, &c. by Thomas Sheraton, cabinet maker, the 3d edition, elegantly printed by Benſley, and illuſtrated with 122 Elegant Engravings, in 49 numbers, 4to *l*2 12s, or done up in boards *l*2 14s.

97 *Saurin's Sermons*, tranſlated by Robinſon and Hunter, with his Portrait, 6 vols. 8vo, *l*1 10s boards.

98 *Sermon on Bankruptcy ſtopping Payment, and the Juſtice of Paying our Debts*, preached at various churches in the city, by William Scott, A. M. 8vo, 6d ſtitched.

99 *Sturme's Reflections on the Works of God, in Nature and Providence*, for every day in the year, tranſlated from the French, and collated with the German, by Adam Clarke, with frontiſpieces, &c. 4 vols. 12mo, 18s boards.

100 *Searle's Horae Solitariae*, new edition, in 2 large vols. 8vo, 16s boards.

101 *Searle's Chriſtian Parent*, new edition, 12mo, 2s 6d bound.

102 *Songs in the Night, by Suſannah Harriſon*, a young woman under heavy affliction, 8th, edition, large print, on fine wove paper, pocket ſize, 2s in ſheep, 2s 8d calf, lettered, or 3s elegantly gilt, &c. as preſents to young ladies.

103 *Saltmarſh's Free Grace*, or the Flowings of Chriſt's Blood freely to Sinners, recommended by William Huntington, with a frontiſpiece, a new edition, 2s ſewed.

104 *Taylor's Univerſal ſyſtem of Stenography, or Short Hand*

Writing, on the eaſieſt and ſimpleſt plan ever offered to the Public, 3d edition, to which is now firſt added, a new Plate of all the Terminations at one view, the whole illuſtrated with 12 Plates, 8vo, 6s boards, or 7s half bound.

105 *Uſher's (Abp.) Life and Remarkable Predictions*, 8vo, 6d ſtitched.

106 *Venn's (Rev. Henry, A. M.) Complete Duty of Man*, or a ſyſtem of Doctrinal and Practical Chriſtianity, to which are added forms of Prayer, and offices of Devotion for the various circumſtances of Life, deſigned for the uſe of families, the 8th edition, with the Life of the Author, handſomely printed on fine paper, 12mo, 3s 6d boards, 4s in ſheep, or 5s elegant in calf.

107 *Walker's Univerſal Gazetteer*, 3d enlarged edition, with Maps, &c. 8vo, 12s bound.

108 *Willis's Survey of St. Aſaph*, conſiderably enlarged and brought down to the preſent time by Edward Edwards, A. M. 2 vols. 8vo, 18s boards.

109 *Wellwood's Glimpſe of Glory*, or a Goſpel Diſcovery of Immanuel's Land, new edition, on fine paper, 12mo, 2s 6d ſewed, or 3s bound.

110 *Watts's (Dr. Iſaac) Improvement of the Mind*, new edition, neatly printed on fine wove paper, a thick 12mo, 3s 6d boards, 4s ſheep, 4s 8d calf, 5s elegantly gilt.

111 *Watts's Logic*, uniform to the above, at the ſame prices.

112 *Watts's Philoſophical Eſſays* on various Subjects, large print, 8vo, 5s boards.

113 *Watts's Lyric Poems*, 12mo, 2s 6d bound.

114 *Watts's World to Come*, 12mo, 3s 6d bound.

115 *Watts's Pſalms and Hymns*, very large print, on fine paper, large 12mo, only 4s 6d bound in ſheep—— 5s plain calf—or black, with gilt edges, 6s—morocco 8s.

116 Ditto, pocket edition, large print, fine paper, cheapeſt edition ever publiſhed, 2s 6d bound in ſheep, 3s in plain calf, or 3s 6d in black calf gilt edges, alſo bound in morocco 5s and 5s 6d.

117 *Watts's Doctrine of the Paſſions*, alſo his Treatiſe on the Love of God, and its influence on all the Paſſions, 18mo, bound in red 2s 6d.

118 Ditto, his Treatiſe on the Love of God ſeparate, bound 1s 6d.
119 *Watts's Songs for Children*, 18mo, half bound, 6d each.
120 *Watts's Second Set of Catechiſms*, ſtitched in ſtrong paper, 6d each.
121 *Young's Night Thoughts*, neat pocket edition, 2s bound.
122 *Ambroſe's War with Devils*, 12mo, 2s bound.
123 *Ambroſe's Adminiſtration of, and Communion with, Angels*, 12mo, 1s 6d bound.
124 *Boſton's Crook in the Lot*, or the Sovereignty and Wiſdom of God Diſplayed in the Afflictions of Men, 8vo, 2s 6d bound.
125 *Boſton's Primetia et Ultima*, 3 vols. 12mo, 9s boards.
126 *Beauties of Dr. Watts's*, with his Portrait, 12mo, 3s boards.
127 *Beauties of Hervey*, with his Portrait, 12mo, 3s boards.
128 *Beauties of Bp. Hall, by Blackwell*, 8vo, 6s boards.
129 *Beauties of Saurin*, 12mo, 2s boards.
130 *Buck's (Rev. Charles) Anecdotes, &c.* 2d edition, 12mo, 3s 6d boards.
131 *Buck's Theological Dictionary*, 2 vols. 8vo, 19s boards.
132 *Berridge's (Rev. John) Life and Converſion*, 8vo, 6d.
133 *Berridge's Laſt Farewel Sermon*, 8vo, 6d.
134 *Bunyan's Pilgrims Progreſs*, (Heptinſtall's) elegantly printed, with beautiful Plates, 8vo, 10s 6d boards;—on royal paper 15s boards; may alſo be had elegantly bound.
135 *Bunyan's Pilgrim* with Bradford's Notes, handſomely printed, with plates, 8vo, 7s bound.
136 *Bunyan's Pilgrim*, with Notes, by Rev. John Newton and Dr. Hawker, 12mo, 3s bound.
137 Ditto, fine paper, with Plates, Life, &c. 4s and 4s 6d bound.
138 *Bunyan's Viſions* 1s, Emblems 9d.
139 ———*Come and Welcome* to Chriſt, 1s and 1s 6d.
140 ———*Water of Life*, 1s.
141 ———*Holy War*, 1s 6d.
142 *Bogatzky's Golden Treaſury* for the Children of God, new edition, 12mo, 3s bound.
143 Ditto, on finer paper, 12mo, 3s 6d bound.
144 *Bibliographical Dictionary*, containing a Chronological account, alphabetically arranged, of the moſt curious, ſcarce, uſeful, and important books, in all departments of Literature publiſhed in Foreign Languages, including

the whole of Dr. Harwood's view of the Claſſics, &c. vols. 1, to 5, and 4. 6s each, or on royal paper 9s each, to be completed in 7 vols.

145 *Clarke (Adam)* on the Uſe and Abuſe of Tobacco, 2d edition, 6d.

146 *Common Prayer* in Latin, by Dr. Harwood, pocket ſize, 3s 6d bound, or in black calf, gilt edges, 4s 6d.

147 *Creighton's (Rev. James, B. A.)* Enquiry into the Origin of True Religion, together with the Invention of Letters, and the diſcovery of the moſt uſeful Arts and Sciences, neatly printed 8vo, 1s.

For a favourable account of the above—*See the critical Review for May laſt.*

148 *Cole on God's Sovereignty*, 8vo, 6s bound.

149 *Davis's Key to Bonycaſtle's Algebra*, 12mo, 4s bound.

150 *Dyer's Life of Rev. Robert Robinſon* of Cambridge, 8vo, 6s boards.

151 *Durham's Unſearchable Riches of Chriſt*, 12mo, 2s 6d bound.

152 *Doddridge's Hymns*, 12mo, 2s bound.

153 *Dodd on Death*, neat pocket edition, 2s bound.

154 *Dodd's Sermons* to Young Men, a new edition, neatly printed on fine paper, 2 vols. 12mo, 8s boards.

155 *Dickinſon's (of America) Sermons and Tracts*, 8vo, 5s boards.

156 *Erſkine's (Rev. Ebenezer) Works*, 3 vols. 8vo, 15s boards.

157 *Edward's (of America) Hiſtory of Redemption*, fine edition, with notes, his Life, &c. 8vo, 6s boards.

158 Ditto, another edition, 12mo, 3s 6d boards.

159 *Edward's Sermons and Life*, 3 vols. 12mo, 9s boards.

160 *Family Inſtructor*, 12mo, 3s bound.

161 *Guyſe's Paraphraſe on the New Teſtament*, 6 vols. 8vo, boards 24s.

162 *Hall's (Bp.) Contemplations*, 3 vols. 8vo, 15s boards.

163 *Homilies of the Church*, new edition, 8vo, 7s boards.

164 *Howes's (Charles, Eſq.) Devout Meditations*, 12mo, 2s 6d bound.

165 *Jenks's Prayers and Offices of Devotions*, 12mo, 3s 6d bound.

166 *Lochee's Elements of Field Fortification*, with plates, 8vo, 5s boards.

167 *Milton's Paradiſe Loſt*, 12mo, 3s bound.

168 *Newton's Christian Character*, exemplified from the papers of Mrs. Mary Magdalen, A—S. 12mo, common boards 2s, fine 2s 6d.

169 *Newton's (Rev. John) Life*, 18mo, 2s bound.

170 *Owen (Dr. John) on the Hebrews*, abridged by Dr. Williams, 4 vols. 8vo, *l*1 boards.

171 *Owen on the* 130 *Psalm*, 12mo, 4s bound.

172 *Owen's Reason of Faith in the Scripture*, 8vo, 5s boards.

173 *Owen's Meditations and Discourses on the Glory of Christ*, 8vo, 5s boards.

174 *Poole's Annotations on the Bible*, 4 vols. 4to, *l*3 boards.

175 *Pascal's Thoughts on Religion, &c.* new edition, with his Life and a fine Portrait, 8vo, 7s boards.

176 *Packet for Youth*, or evidences of Christianity, drawn from the mind by a Lady, 12mo, 1s 6d boards.

177 *Pearsall's Contemplations*, 12mo, 3s boards.

178 *Romaine's Walk of Faith*, 12mo, 3s 6d.

179 *Romaine's Life of Faith*, new edition, 12mo, 3s boards.

180 *Romaine's Triumph of Faith*, 3s 6d.

181 *Romaine's Letters*, 12mo, 3s 6d bound.

182 *Rowe's (Mrs.) Devout Exercises of the Heart*, a new edition, large print, on fine paper, 18mo, 1s 6d bound.

N. B. The above is the *only edition* to be procured with Large Print.

183 *Stennet's (Dr.) Discourses on Personal Religion*, 2 vols. 12mo, 5s boards—fine paper 6s.

184 *Stennet on the Parable of the Sower*, 12mo, 3s 6d boards.

185 *Telemachus in Italian*, many neat plates, 2 vols. 18mo, 7s boards.

186 *Toplady on Predestination*, 12mo, 3s.

187 *Thirlwall's Diatessaron* in English, 12mo 3s 6d, 8vo 6s boards.

188 *Whitefield's Letter to Wesley on Free Grace*, 6d.

189 *Wright's (George Esq.) Pleasing Melancholy* or a Walk among the Tombs, 12mo, 3s boards.

190 *Wake's Epistles of the Apostolic Fathers*,, 8vo, 5s boards.

191 *William's Diary*, 12mo, 2s 6d, 3s, and 3s 6d.

192 *Watson's Art of Divine Contentment* 12mo, 2s bound.

193 *Wells's Geography, of the Old and New Testament*, with plates, 2 vols. 8vo, 12s.

194 *Young's Last Day*, a Poem, 6d.

NICHOLSON, *Printer, Clerkenwell.*